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“Actuated by the most glorious cause that mankind  
ever fought in, I am determined to defend this post  
to the last extremity.”

*Robertagaw*







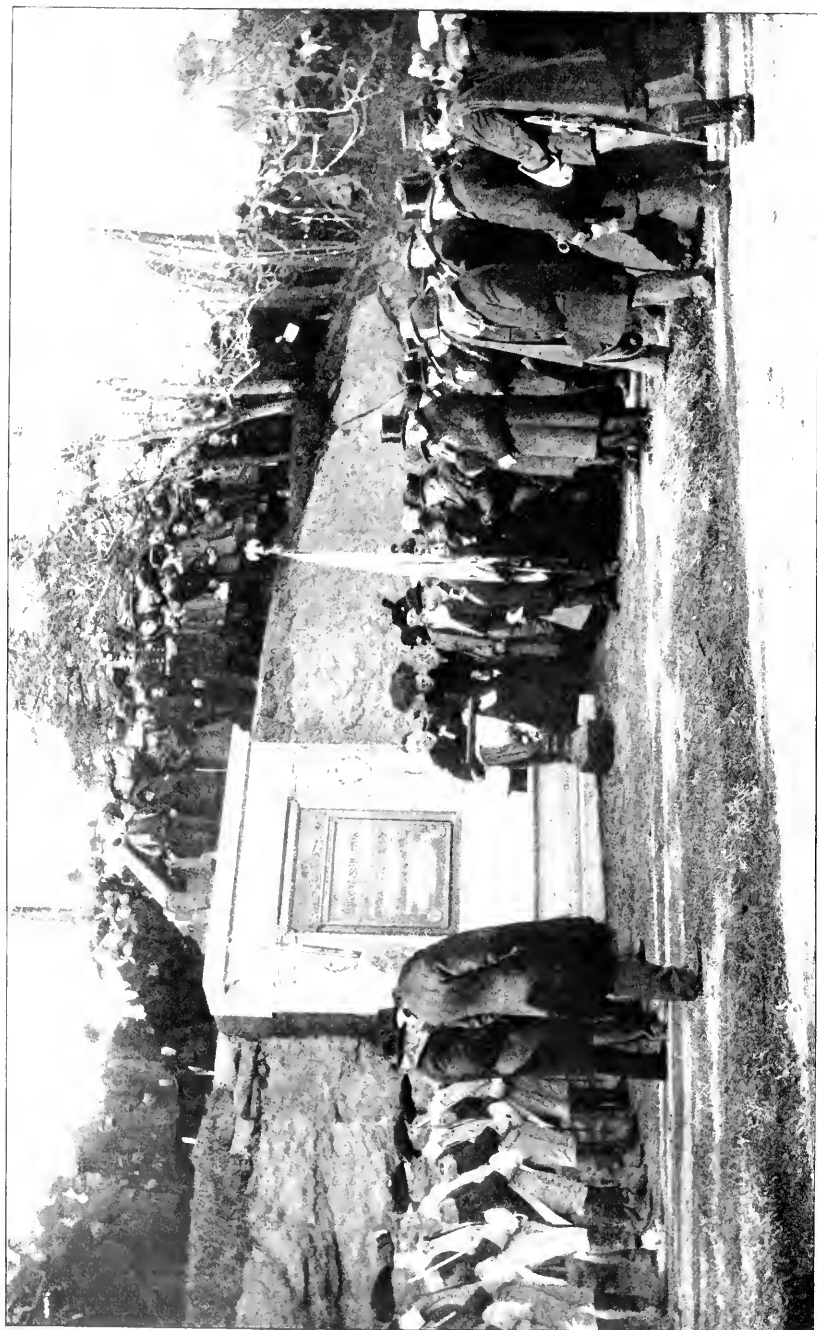












DEDICATION OF FORT WASHINGTON MONUMENT, NEW YORK CITY, NOVEMBER 16, 1901.

# FORT WASHINGTON

An Account of the Identification of the  
Site of Fort Washington, New York  
City, and the Erection and Dedication  
of a Monument thereon Nov. 16, 1901,  
by the Empire State Society of the  
Sons of the American Revolution, with  
the Coöperation of the American Scenic  
and Historic Preservation Society

with  
A HISTORY OF THE DEFENCE AND  
REDUCTION OF MOUNT WASHINGTON

by Reginald Pelham Bolton

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EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL,  
EDWARD PAYSON CONE,  
JAMES DE LA MONTANYE,  
CHARLES WELLS WOOD,  
AZARIAH HALL SAWYER.



# FORT WASHINGTON

## PART I

### THE MOVEMENT FOR MONUMENTING THE HISTORIC SITE

AT a meeting of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution held November 15, 1897, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

*Resolved*, That the following memorial be adopted and signed on behalf of the Society by the President and three Vice-Presidents and transmitted by the Secretary, under seal of the Society, to His Honor, the Mayor and the Municipal Assembly of the City of New York.

#### MEMORIAL.

TO THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

GENTLEMEN: The Empire State Society, of the Sons of the American Revolution, assembled on the eve of the 121st anniversary of the capture of and massacre at Fort Washington, respectfully requests you to take the proper steps to mark permanently that historic spot. It is a reproach to the patriotism, civic pride and generosity of that city that this spot, on which occurred the greatest disaster to American arms during the War for American Independence (according to an eminent American historian), is so neglected that it can now be identified only with great difficulty, by two remaining bastions which are rapidly disappearing under the action of the elements. If prompt action is not taken permanently to mark this site, its location will soon be involved in the same doubt and historical dispute that for many years, and until quite recently, enveloped the actual scene of the Battle of Harlem Heights. The misleading position of the name "Fort Washington," on some of the maps of the city, the diversity of locations attributed to it in popular opinion, and the practical difficulties which a visitor encounters in finding it, demonstrate that this sacred spot is already passing into the shadow of doubt which precedes complete loss of identification.

Mamhattan Island was the theatre of but two military engagements during the War of the American Revolution. The first and minor was the Battle of Harlem Heights, on September 16, 1776, on the day after the unresisted invasion of the Island by the British. In this engagement the American loss was about 20 or 25 in killed and wounded. The second and more important was the capture of Fort Washington, on November 16, 1776. In the latter, after their gallant and desperate resistance of an enemy outnumbering them more than five to one, and having sustained a loss behind their works of 150 killed and wounded, while inflicting a loss of 500 killed and wounded upon their adversaries, the Americans

yielded to an overwhelming force, and surrendered 3,000 prisoners of war\* to languish in British dungeons or perish on British prison-ships. The Hessian mercenaries of the British, enraged by the desperate resistance which they had encountered, violated the laws of humanity and civilized warfare by wreaking their vengeance in a horrible butchery of their helpless captives; while Washington, contemplating the scene from a distance, wept like a child at the fate of his heroic companions-in-arms, which he was powerless to avert. On that date the last vestige of American authority disappeared from the Island of Manhattan until the evacuation of the Island by the British seven years and nine days later, after American Independence had been won. The loss of Fort Washington was a crushing blow to the American cause.

We respectfully represent to your Honorable Body that the importance of that historical event and the greatness of the sacrifice then made, warrant you, and the present state of historical interest justifies you, in making such moderate appropriations as may be necessary for permanently and effectively marking this spot which to-day has neither stone, post nor finger-board to assist in its identification, and which is known only to a few residents of the vicinity, our city officials, and a handful of historical students. As the site lies immediately within the private property boundary on the western side of the Fort Washington Road, about in range with 183d street, we suggest that if the acquisition of a parcel of land for a small public park be impracticable, a substantial but not elaborate granite arch spanning the public highway at that point, properly inscribed, would be a suitable and effective means of marking the place. The Fort Washington Road, in conjunction with the Boulevard Lafayette, is destined to become one of the most popular and picturesque pleasure drives in the city; and in the near future thousands instead of hundreds will daily pass in ignorance of the spot most deeply stained with the blood of our patriotic ancestors on the Island of Manhattan, and the spot which ought most reverently to be cherished in the hearts of our liberty-loving people.

Signed in behalf of the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, this 15th day of November, A. D. 1897, and of the Independence of the United States the 122d.



STEPHEN M. WRIGHT,  
*Secretary.*

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW,  
*President.*  
ROBERT B. ROOSEVELT,  
*Vice-President.*  
WALTER S. LOGAN,  
*Vice-President.*  
RALPH E. PRIME,  
*Vice-President.*

In pursuance of the foregoing resolution, the following Committee was appointed to present the Memorial to the Mayor and Municipal Assembly, together with such additional information as they might

Good authorities differ as to the exact numbers engaged and the losses sustained on either side. The foregoing statements are based on John Fiske's "The American Revolution."



FORT WASHINGTON MONUMENT, NEW YORK CITY.



deem advisable: Compatriots Edward Haganan Hall, Gen. Horatio C. King, Col. Ralph Earl Prime, Capt. Stephen Mott Wright, William Watkins Kenly and Walter Romeyn Benjamin.

On May 3, 1898, the Committee, accompanied by the Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt (then First Vice-President of the Society), called upon His Honor the Mayor, and laid before him the printed Memorial of the Society, together with a statement concerning the identity of the site of Fort Washington\* and a brief sketch of the Battle of November 16, 1776.

The effort to secure the marking of the historic site by the Municipal authorities was unavailing; but great public interest was aroused and the Society was obliged to print a second edition of its brochure on the subject.

During the summer of 1901, as the result of a conference between Compatriot Walter S. Logan, President of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and the representative of the Hon. Andrew H. Green, President of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, the following letter was addressed by the Secretary of the latter Society to James Gordon Bennett, Esq., owner of part of the Fort Washington property:

THE AMERICAN  
SCENIC AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

*Office of the Secretary,  
Tribune Building, New York.*

*August 21, 1901.*

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, ESQ.,  
*Bureau of the New York Herald,  
Paris, France.*

DEAR SIR: On November 16, 1901, occurs the 125th anniversary of the battle of Fort Washington, the citadel of which stood immediately south of your house on Fort Washington avenue, on what I am informed is your property.

The Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, with the co-operation of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, desires to mark the site with some appropriate memorial and to celebrate the event on the approaching anniversary.

In examining the locality, the most eligible spot for a memorial appears to be the rock on the western side of the avenue, a few feet south of the entrance to your place. I enclose a photograph of the rock, which is about 12 feet high, and a map showing that it is on your, more strictly speaking, under the site of the northeast bastion of the fort.

In behalf of the two organizations above-mentioned, and many individuals interested in the subject, I write to ask you:

\*See "Fort Washington and Its Related Fortifications," reprinted on page 41, *et seq.*

1. Will you permit the erection on this spot of a memorial of the character of the design first mentioned hereafter, without expense to yourself?

2. Or will you contribute to, or bear the whole expense of a memorial of the character of the second design mentioned hereafter? In the event of your bearing the expense, it would not be unreasonable that you personally, or the New York Herald, should receive due credit for the execution of the enterprise.

3. If you think favorably of the suggestions herein contained, will you appoint a "minister plenipotentiary" here in New York, with whom we can consult concerning plans, etc., unless you prefer to have them submitted to yourself across the water?

The two forms of memorial suggested are as follows:

FIRST PLAN.

To consist of a dressed stone, about 4 feet long by 3 feet high, set into the face of the rock, and bearing a bronze tablet with the following inscription:

This Tablet Marks the Site of  
FORT WASHINGTON,  
Constructed by the Continental Troops in the Summer of 1776.  
Lost to the British After an Heroic Defense, Nov. 16, 1776.  
Repossessed by the Americans  
Upon Their Triumphal Entry Into the City of New York,  
November 25, 1783.

Erected by  
The Empire State Society of the  
Sons of the American Revolution,  
November 16, 1901.

Above this tablet, on the top of the rock, to be laid a stone, about a foot thick, 6 or 8 feet wide, and 8 or 10 feet long, to bear on the front edge the words FORT WASHINGTON, and to serve as the platform of a cannon, which can probably be obtained from the Government.

This plan will cost about \$500, and we can erect it without financial assistance.

SECOND PLAN.

This plan contemplates the erection in the face of the rock of a wayside seat, of stone, with certain architectural embellishments, such as two columns supporting an entablature and embracing a bronze tablet. This would be more pretentious and beautiful, and would cost about \$1,500. In the event of your bearing the expense of this memorial, I should suggest the insertion on the tablet, after the word "Erected," the line,

"Through the generosity of James Gordon Bennett, Esq."

I need not add anything about the stirring memories connected with this site. Much has been made of the Battle of Harlem, which was an insignificant skirmish compared with the Battle of Fort Washington. The latter was the most important military conflict on Manhattan Island, and the heroism there displayed and the sacrifices there made are deserving of some sort of recognition on the approaching 125th anniversary.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL.

The foregoing letter was accompanied by a photograph of the rock, a map of the site, sketches of the two designs, and a copy of the Fort Washington brochure published by the Sons of the American Revolution in 1898. In reply, Mr. Bennett wrote as follows:

LYSISTRATA.

VENISE, SEPT. 15, 1901.

DEAR SIR: In reply to your letter of August 21st I beg to say that I shall be happy to give your society the permission to erect a memorial of Fort Washington upon my property in Fort Washington avenue, and also to bear the entire expense of the memorial, which I note from your estimate will amount to \$1,500 (fifteen hundred dollars), according to the second plan, which I prefer. If you will send me the details I will give all necessary instructions for the carrying out of this work.

Yours very truly,

J. G. BENNETT.

E. H. HALL, ESQ.

Mr. Bennett's very generous response was acknowledged by the following letters from the Secretaries of the two Societies:

THE AMERICAN  
SCENIC AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

*Office of the Secretary,  
Tribune Building, New York.*

October 1, 1901

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, ESQ.,

*Paris, France.*

MY DEAR SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 15th ult., from Venice, consenting to the erection of a memorial on the site of Fort Washington, and offering to bear the expense of it yourself. I thank you very sincerely in behalf of those for whom I wrote, and add the assurances of my own very great appreciation.

I reported your offer to the Board of Management of the Sons of the American Revolution at a special meeting called for that purpose last evening, and the Secretary of that Society will communicate to you their action. They have already begun to arrange for the dedication, and will endeavor to make it commensurate with the significance of the occasion.

Repeating our assurances of appreciation, I remain,

Very truly yours,

EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL,  
*Secretary.*

EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY,  
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

*Headquarters,  
1123 Broadway, New York.*

*October 1, 1901.*

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, ESQ.,  
*Paris, France.*

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to inform you that at a special meeting of the Board of Management of the Empire State Society, of the Sons of the American Revolution, held last evening, the following resolutions concerning the erection of a memorial on the site of Fort Washington, to be dedicated November 16th next, were adopted:

*"Resolved,* That the action of Compatriot Edward Hagaman Hall in taking the preliminary steps concerning the marking of the site of Fort Washington be ratified and approved.

*"Resolved,* That the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution gratefully acknowledges and accepts the offer of James Gordon Bennett, Esq., contained in his letter from Venice, dated September 15, 1901, to bear the expense of erecting a memorial on the site of Fort Washington, on his property in Fort Washington avenue, New York City, and extends to him its very hearty appreciation of his generous act. This beautiful and enduring memorial, while commemorating the heroic sacrifices that have made the site sacred to all Americans, will also stand as a renewed evidence of the public spirit and liberality of the donor, and of the pride in American citizenship which a distinguished father and son have cultivated through the instrumentality of an enlightened public press for three-quarters of a century.

*"Resolved,* That the plan for the memorial submitted by Compatriot Charles R. Lamb, of the firm of J. & R. Lamb, be approved, subject to any modifications suggested by Mr. Bennett, Mr. Lamb and Mr. Hall.

*"Resolved,* That the Board of Management of this Society be constituted a Committee of Arrangements to prepare for the dedication of the memorial on November 16th next, the President of this Society to be Chairman of the same, and that the said Committee have power to add to its numbers.

*"Resolved,* That the thanks of this Society be extended to the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society for its co-operation in this undertaking, and that it be requested to appoint a committee, of which its President shall be a member, to act in conjunction with and as a part of the Committee of Arrangements of this Society."

Enclosed you will find a copy of the detailed plan for the memorial, prepared by J. & R. Lamb, of 59 Carmine street, New York City; also a formal estimate for the construction of the work. Mr. Lamb says that if you will order the work by cable upon receipt of this communication, it can be finished by November 16.

The Committee on Arrangements will proceed at once with the preparations for the Dedicatory Ceremonies. It is proposed to make them as impressive as possible. The Governors of New York and Pennsylvania (the fort was built by Pennsylvania troops) will be invited to speak, and the State and United States authorities will be asked for military representation. We had both military and naval representations at the dedication of our monument at Washington's Headquarters in Dobb's Ferry, in 1894.



We will be very happy to receive any suggestions from you concerning the ceremonies. We shall, of course, expect you or your representatives to participate.

We should like to conform to your wishes if you will indicate them in regard to publicly announcing your gift and the arrangements for the dedication. Would you prefer to announce it first through the *Herald*, or have it given out to all the papers simultaneously?

May we ask of you the favor of an acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter by cable, so that we may be assured that it has reached you promptly? Is it best to address you at Paris, or can we communicate with you more quickly at some other address?

With renewed assurances of the Society's appreciation of your patriotic interest in this matter, I remain,

Yours very truly,

ERWIN VAN DEUSEN GAZZAM.

In reply to the latter, Mr. Bennett cabled from Syracuse, Sicily, as follows:

SYRACUSA, *October 20, 1901.*

GAZZAM,

1123 *Broadway, New York.*

Letter October 1 received. What your Society proposes satisfactory. Have no suggestion offer. Announce through all papers. My mail address, 104 Champs Elysees, Paris. Cable address, Namouna, Paris.

BENNETT.

## PART II.

## THE MONUMENT AND ITS DEDICATION.

Immediately upon the receipt of Mr. Bennett's communication, President Walter S. Logan of the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, with the co-operation of the Hon. Andrew H. Green, President of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, appointed from the membership of the two Societies the following General Committee of Arrangements, himself accepting the Chairmanship by request:

## GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

WALTER S. LOGAN, Chairman.

EDWIN VAN D. GAZZAM, Secretary.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT,  
HON. ANDREW H. GREEN,  
TRUMAN G. AVERY,  
GEORGE D. BANGS,  
HERBERT B. BISSELL,  
REGINALD P. BOLTON,  
GEORGE C. BATCHELLER,  
COL. JOHN C. CALHOUN,  
EDWARD PAYSON CONE,  
MAJ. W. H. CORBUSIER, U. S. A.,  
LOUIS H. CORNISH,  
RICHARD T. DAVIES,  
JAMES DE LA MONTANYE,  
HON. CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW,  
GEN. FERDINAND P. EARLE,  
FRANKLIN A. ETHRIDGE,  
THEODORE FITCH,  
WILLIAM H. FLITNER,  
EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL,  
CHARLES W. HASKINS,  
HON. HUGH HASTINGS,  
TEUNIS D. HUNTING,  
REV. JESSE L. HURLBUT, D.D.,  
RICHARD C. JACKSON,  
WILLIAM H. KELLY,

GEN. HORATIO C. KING,  
CHARLES B. KNOX,  
CHARLES R. LAMB,  
WILLIAM A. MARBLE,  
COL. A. G. MILLS,  
VINCENT M. MUNIER,  
REV. C. MORTON MURRAY,  
W. A. MUSCHENHEIM,  
CHARLES L. NICHOLS,  
DR. CHARLES N. PALMER,  
COL. RALPH E. PRIME,  
CHARLES B. PROVOST,  
HON. C. A. PUGSLEY,  
CARROLL C. RAWLINGS,  
CHARLES A. RICH,  
HON. ROBERT B. ROOSEVELT,  
HON. HIRAM R. STEELE,  
IRA BLISS STEWART,  
ALBERT J. SQUIER,  
ALBERT ULMANN,  
JOHN R. VAN WORMER,  
WILLIAM W. J. WARREN,  
WILLIAM H. WAYNE,  
CAPT. STEPHEN M. WRIGHT,  
HENRY B. YOUNG.

The monument designed by Mr. Charles Rollinson Lamb was erected against and upon the living rock on which the northeastern bastion of Fort Washington stood. It is located on the western side of Fort Washington avenue, in a line with 183d street, at the highest ele-

vation of any public drive on Manhattan Island. It is composed of marble, granite and bronze, and consists of a wayside seat, flanked by two pilasters and surmounted by an entablature. These features embrace a tablet which bears the following inscription:

THIS MEMORIAL MARKS THE SITE OF  
FORT WASHINGTON,  
CONSTRUCTED BY THE CONTINENTAL TROOPS IN THE  
SUMMER OF 1776,  
TAKEN BY THE BRITISH AFTER AN HEROIC DEFENCE  
NOVEMBER 16, 1776.  
REPOSSESSED BY THE AMERICANS  
UPON THEIR TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO THE CITY OF  
NEW YORK NOVEMBER 25, 1783.  
ERECTED THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF  
JAMES GORDON BENNETT  
BY  
THE EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION NOVEMBER 16, 1901.  
SITE REGISTERED BY THE AMERICAN SCENIC AND  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

On the elevated ground level with the top of the entablature and forming a part of the memorial is a concrete platform, supporting a cannon.

The monument was dedicated with elaborate and impressive ceremonies on Saturday, November 16, 1901. The day was ideal, the sky being almost cloudless, and the air warm and still.

The exercises of the day began with a Memorial Service at 11 A. M. in Holyrood Protestant Episcopal Church, situated on the battlefield at Broadway (Kingsbridge road) and One Hundred and Eighty-first street. The rector, the Rev. C. Morton Murray, officiated, assisted by Canon John Harris Knowles, Rev. Thomas H. Sill, Rev. L. H. Schwab, Rev. Frederick Greaves, Rev. Dr. John T. Patey, Rev. Geo. F. Clover, Rev. Alexander Hamilton and Rev. Dr. Randall C. Hall. The service was one especially authorized by the bishop of the diocese for the occasion.

During the day there was an exhibition of relics from the Battlefield of Fort Washington in the Guild Room of Holyrood Church. The exhibition proved so interesting that it was kept open for several weeks after the celebration.

Another interesting feature of the dedication was the placing of guide-boards to mark the salient features of the battlefield within the radius of about a mile around the fort. With the aid of the map and historical sketch printed in the programme, students of history were

able to trace the movements of the battle and locate the sites of the principal operations of November 16, 1776.

At 1.30 P. M. a procession was formed at One Hundred and Eighty-seventh street and Amsterdam avenue, and proceeded in the following order to the monument:

Platoon of Police.  
Dr. E. V. D. Gazzam, Marshal, and Aides.  
Eighth United States Artillery Band.  
United States Coast Artillery from Governor's Island.  
First Battery Artillery, N. G. N. Y., Capt. Louis Wendel.  
Colors of the Empire State Society, S. A. R.  
Detail from Washington Continental Guard of New York.  
Detail from First Regiment of Minute Men, of Washington, D. C.  
Band of the New York Juvenile Asylum.  
Boys of the New York Deaf and Dumb Asylum.  
Citizens and School Children.

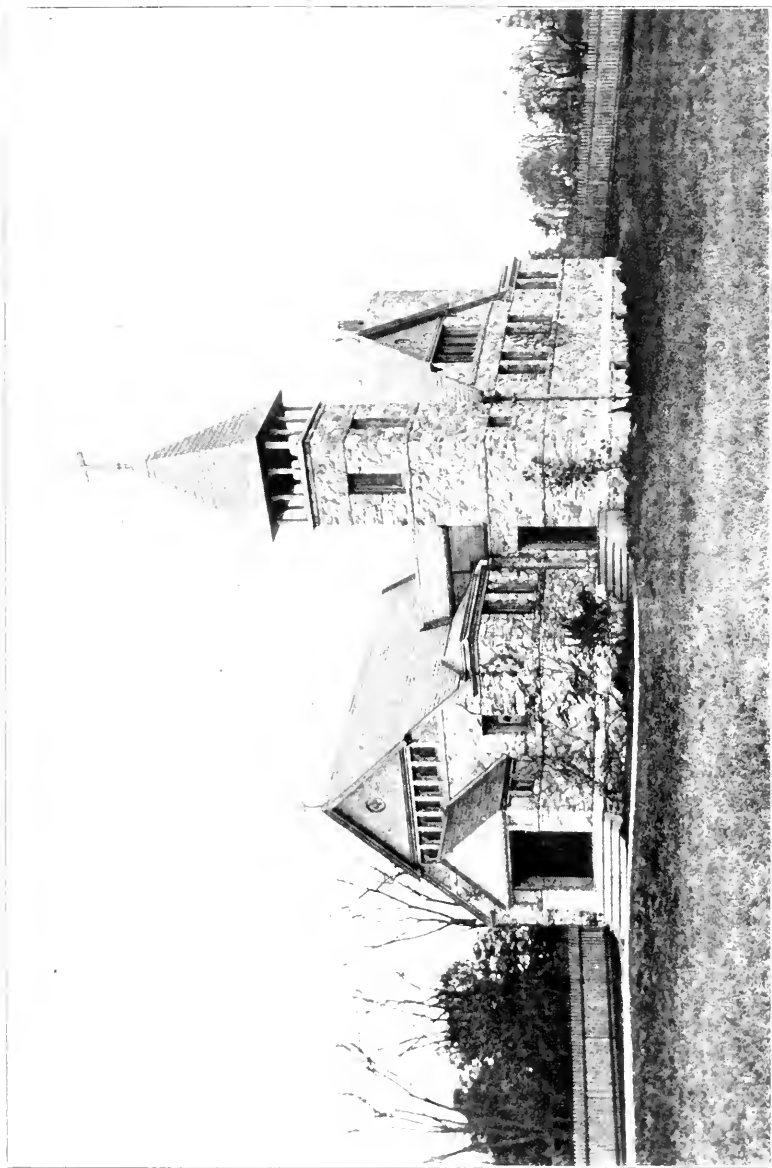
At Broadway (formerly called Kingsbridge road), the line of march covered a portion of the route taken by the American Army when it repossessed Fort Washington in 1783.

Upon the arrival of the procession at the Fort, the troops were drawn up facing the monument, and the memorial was unveiled simultaneously with the playing of "The Star Spangled Banner" by the Eighth United States Artillery Band; the firing of a national salute by Wendel's Battery stationed within the old Fort, and the hoisting of the United States Flag by Compatriot Christopher R. Forbes, a lineal descendant of John Van Arsdale, who raised the flag at the Battery in New York city when it was evacuated by the British in 1783.

President Walter Seth Logan then introduced the Chaplain of the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, the Rev. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, D.D., who offered the following invocation:

INVOCATION BY REV. JESSE LYMAN HURLBUT, D.D.

"Our Father and our God! Thou wast the God of our fathers, and in the triumph that Thou hast given to this nation, and the guardianship which Thou hast exercised, we recognize Thy care and Thy grace. We thank Thee, O God, that in the days of old Thou didst call forth heroes to found a nation. We praise Thee for their courage; we praise Thee for their self-sacrifice. We especially praise Thee here and now for the noble body of men, who on this spot, gave up their lives—many of them in prisons—for the land that they loved, and gave up their lives willingly. We thank Thee, our Father, that Thou hast watched over the destinies of this nation and hast made it even greater than our fathers could have dreamed. We thank Thee that Thou hast raised up men to



HOLYROOD CHURCH, BROADWAY AND 181ST STREET, NEW YORK.



take their places. We pray Thee, our Father, that we may be worthy of the great heritage that we possess, of the great opportunities that rise before us; and as we look upon this memorial, as we recount the events of the past, we ask Thee that we may have that same reverence for Thee, that same love of country that marked our fathers here. Guide us in the future as Thou hast guided us as a people in the past. Crown all our efforts with Thy blessing and bring us to Thy place in glory. All this we ask in the name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen."

BY THE PRESIDENT: "There is but one New York City in the world. It sometimes differs on great questions. There was a difference of opinion in New York a few days ago, but there is only one opinion now, and we are a unit. New York is always a unit in its patriotism. Whatever criticism may have been made from time to time on this City, none of it has ever touched the President of the Municipal Council, and we are a unit here to-day in greeting the Hon. Randolph Guggenheimer, President of the Municipal Council of The City of New York, and its representative.

## ADDRESS BY THE HON. RANDOLPH GUGGENHEIMER.

"This is a day of historic retrospect. The memorial which marks the site of Fort Washington and records in imperishable letters the superb patriotism of the Revolutionary Fathers, will through all the future years inspire Americans with loyalty to the old flag. The work accomplished by the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society in identifying the places in which the founders of this Republic ventured their lives in their immortal struggle for freedom, is set from a patriotic standpoint beyond all value.

"Americans who are proud of the heroism of their ancestors owe a deep debt of gratitude to these societies, and in this special instance to Mr. James Gordon Bennett, who has presented the memorial which will be dedicated to-day to mark the site of Fort Washington. Incidents such as these prove that patriotism is not dead, but that it still lives in the hearts and intellects of the American people whose sincerest aspiration to-day is, that they will be able to hand down to their children the heritage which they received intact and unstained from the hands of the Revolutionary Fathers."

"I take great pleasure in accepting this beautiful memorial in behalf of The City of New York."

The assemblage then repaired to the tent within the Fort, where the literary exercises were held. They were opened by an address by the President as follows:

ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT WALTER SETH LOGAN.

"I told Dr. Murray that if I could conduct the services in this tent as well as he conducted the exercises in the church, it would be a great success. I am sure that if Colonel Magaw, one hundred and twenty-five years ago, had shot his cannon as straight across the river as Canon Knowles shot in the church this morning, the British never would have got past them.

"We are standing to-day on hallowed ground. Here one hundred and twenty-five years ago, three thousand troops, the flower of the American Army, after a sturdy resistance to overwhelming numbers of their foes, surrendered to their enemy. They did not surrender, however, until five hundred Hessians had bitten the dust. They did not surrender until defence was no longer possible and surrender was the only thing left them to do. They were made prisoners of war nominally; really they were executed; most of them by slow torture on the English prison ships. As the day we are celebrating was the darkest day in American history, so the treatment of the prisoners here captured is the blackest page in English history.

"A swift ship was sent across the ocean bearing the news to George III of the victory of British arms. The British Army was sent across the Hudson to chase Washington and his army across the Jerseys and down into Pennsylvania. Wherever the British flag floated there was rejoicing at the news of the victory here. Wherever a band of American patriots was gathered together, there was the weeping of bitter tears and despairing of their country's fate; but across the river on yonder heights there stood a man watching the conflict which he could not take part in, and a surrender which he could not prevent; and he never despaired of his country and its cause. Whatever anyone else thought that night, Washington was thinking how he might wipe out the memory of the defeat by some decisive victory.

"Forty days passed away; forty days of trouble and trial for the American Army and its Commander; forty nights of worry and wakefulness. During those forty days they chased Washington and his army—what there was left of it—from the Hudson to the Delaware, and across the Delaware to Pennsylvania. They chased him from river to river, and from state to state, never giving him a moment's rest. But the forty days passed away and it was the morning after Christmas, 1776. That Commander who had been chased through New Jersey and Pennsylvania—that Commander who had been given scarcely a moment's rest since the battle here—that Commander and his army appeared before the British in Trenton, and the scales were turned.



There had been feasting that Christmas wherever the British flag floated. The English people—the partisans of George III in England, for they did not really represent the English people—had feasted over the news that they had received of the Battle of Long Island; they had not yet heard of the conflict at Fort Washington. There was feasting here in New York: champagne among the officers and beer among the men. Was not the British triumphant everywhere and the war at an end? There was feasting in Trenton and the Hessians there had gone on a glorious drunk. Forty days had passed away. The ship that was sent to carry the news to George III. had not arrived on the other side. The flowers that the young Tory maidens of New York had woven into garlands in celebration of the victory of their cause had scarcely faded. It was the morning after Christmas, 1776, and Washington and his army appeared before the British headquarters at Trenton, and the Hessians were sleeping after their night's drunk. The guards even were too drunk to give the warning; and almost without the firing of a shot, one thousand English soldiers were taken prisoners of war and the day at Trenton was won before sunrise. Seven days more had passed away. Cornwallis, when he heard the news from Trenton, postponed his holiday trip to Europe; he did not take it until after the Battle of Yorktown. He postponed his holiday trip, for he had other business to attend to, and again he started down through the Jerseys to chase Washington and his army; he caught up with him on the banks of the Assampink. It was late at night, and Cornwallis, who was paid by the day and did not like to work overtime, said: "I will wait until morning and will bag the old fox." He rose early in the morning, but the "old fox" was not there to be bagged; and before Cornwallis had had his breakfast, the news came to him that Washington had attacked Princeton, and won the day, capturing many prisoners. Cornwallis came home; and Washington and his army went to Morristown, where from the heights he could watch every movement of the British troops here in New York.

"In a few months there followed Saratoga, and Burgoyne was bagged that time. Then followed that winter at Valley Forge where Washington forged the army that was to become the liberators of their country. Then came alternate defeat and victory. Afterwards, Camden, King's Mountain, Eutaw Springs, and finally came Yorktown. The news was sent by swift messenger, this time by land, to every corner of the American nation which had just been born; it was carried as fast as horse and rider could go—the news that America was free.

"They tell the story of the one Quaker watchman in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia police force then consisted of one man; he was Commissioner, Superintendent, Roundsman and high private. It was his duty to patrol the streets of Philadelphia—they were not very long—and

shout the hours of the night; the hours and half hours as they passed. The messenger came riding in from Yorktown bearing the news of Yorktown at 2.29 in the morning. That faithful old Quaker policeman must do his duty, and must shout the hours and the half hours as of yore; but his heart was full of the victory of his country, and so he went through the streets of Philadelphia shouting—'Half-past 2 in the morning and Cornwallis is taken.' Half-past 2 in the morning and American liberty is won. Half-past 2 in the morning and there are no more kings to rule in America. Half-past 2 in the morning and the dawn of a new civilization has come in. The time of the surrender here at Fort Washington was the midnight of American liberty. The surrender at Yorktown was half-past 2 in the morning as the sun's rays came glimmering over the walls. It is half-past nine now. What will be our country and her civilization when it comes to half-past two in the afternoon? What will it be?

"I could not pass a civil service examination in theology which Dr. Murray subjected me to this morning, but when I look at the splendid life and career of George Washington, I do not hesitate to say that whatever may be my theology, his God is my God, and the religion that inspired him to the glorious deeds that he performed during and after the Revolution, is the religion which I hope will be an inspiration to my children who come after me. We may believe that the spirit of George Washington is here to-day; and what does he see? He sees a city larger than the nation which he founded. He sees a nation grown ten times in territory and more than twenty times in population since the surrender at Fort Washington. He sees a great city on the banks of the Potomac that bears his name. In that city there is a noble shaft to his memory, which Canon Knowles told us of this morning. I think that if we imagine that he goes back among the angels to-night and reports what he has seen to-day, he will be prouder of the monument that we have just dedicated—small though it may be—than the monument which was reared by loving hands in the city which bears his name.

"But the great part of the result which has been achieved since then has been accomplished by the soldiers and sailors of the Army and Navy of the United States, but not all of it. If Washington were here to-day he would see a country which, instead of extending from Maine to Florida, and one hundred miles back from the Atlantic Coast (wherever the British had not got a footing), he would see a country extending from the Pacific Ocean to the Orient, and from the Yukon to San Juan and Porto Rico. He would see the language which he spoke when he was here, which was only spoken by twenty millions, now spoken by one hundred and twenty millions. He would see the English-speaking people of the earth the dominant force in it. And Washington,

if he is here to-day, if Washington is watching our efforts now, he may well be proud of the work that he did and the work that the American Army did one hundred and twenty-five years ago. And if Washington is here to-day, if the spirit of Washington is here, I think the spirit of Colonel Magaw, who so gallantly defended this fort, is also here; and he will be proud to know that one of his lineal descendants is here, bearing his share of the honor and glory of to-day.

"But much as we may pay tribute to the soldiers and sailors of the American Army and Navy, it has been America's men of peace who have done the most. Washington was at his greatest, not as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United States, but as Chairman of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and as first President of the United States. Hamilton did great work at Yorktown. He stormed those redoubts gallantly, but we remember Alexander Hamilton as the man who organized the Treasury Department of the United States. Yes, side by side with Washington, sharing the honors of the Revolution, are two great and glorious men of peace who never bore arms—Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Jackson is remembered to-day, not so much for his victory at New Orleans as for his veto of the United States Bank Bill, and his prompt action in suppressing the nullifiers of South Carolina. The great figure of the Civil War is not Grant, nor Sherman, nor Sheridan, but the lawyer and man of peace—Abraham Lincoln. And when you come to the Spanish War, we honor Dewey, and Sampson, and Schley (or Schley and Sampson); we honor Miles, Merritt, Shafter and Roosevelt; but the supreme commander of the Army and Navy of the United States during that war, the man whose level head and decisive judgment were always at the service of his country; the man who, perhaps, did more than any other to bring about the glorious result, was William McKinley, the lawyer, a man of peace, who deserved a better fate than death by an assassin's bullet. There was in that war a man who led his regiment up the hill at San Juan, and who came home to be a patriotic Governor of New York and a patriotic President of the United States. The men of peace have done their part, and their full part, to make the American nation what it is.

"If I should name the three great events of history, three great events which our race is proud of, I should name first that event which occurred on the green island of Runnymede where the Barons wrested from the unwilling hands of King John, that first real token of English liberty—Magna Charta; and, second, the assembly of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 with Washington at its head, for there was framed a plan of government which is being imitated all over the world. I should name the third, the Peace Congress at The Hague, the object of which I fully approve of—the peace of all the earth. The great work of

the Constitutional Convention was the establishment of the Supreme Court of the United States. The great work of the Hague Congress was the establishment of the Supreme Court of the world; and when the Historian of the Empire State comes to call the roll of our State's great men, he will call first, perhaps, the name of Peter Stuyvesant, who planned the City of New York. He will call after that, Schuyler, Hamilton, Van Buren and Clinton; he will call Tilden, Cleveland and Roosevelt, but he will not stop until he has called the name of Andrew D. White, who, more than any other man, is responsible for the Peace Congress at The Hague, which bids fair to become the supreme federation of the world.

"Well, what of half-past two in the afternoon? Since George Washington won the victories of the Revolution, the language which he spoke has become the language of the best part of the world. The institutions which he fought for have been copied by all the peoples of the world. Since the victories of the Revolution, liberty has become the rule, and despotism the exception, all over our planet. But that is only half-past nine. What of half-past two in the afternoon? I will tell you what I think of half-past two. I think that the race which maintained its liberty in the defiles of the German forests, the race that settled England and won the Magna Charta, and the Bill of Rights from hostile kings, and peopled the United States; the race that ever since the Battle of Blenheim has been forging ahead in the world; that race, before half-past two in the afternoon, will become the dominant race in the world and its institutions will govern all the people of this planet."

After a moment's interval Mr. Logan said: "When Mr. James Gordon Bennett was asked his consent to allow a monument to be placed on his grounds, he said: 'Put a better monument there, and I will pay for it.' When he was asked to name a representative to be present to-day, he declined; he did not care to be known in the matter, but there is a man who happens to be here to-day who was a close friend and lawyer of the elder Bennett, and still is the lawyer of the younger Bennett, and I have great pleasure in introducing him to you to-day, John Townshend, Esq."

ADDRESS BY JOHN TOWNSHEND, ESQ.

"After you have heard that Mr. Bennett has refused to name anyone to appear for him to-day, it would not become me to say anything that has come to me as the representative of Mr. Bennett. You know that the relations between counsel and client are sacred, and my lips are sealed. Everything that I know about Mr. Bennett and his father, I have learned as their lawyer, for I have had the great fortune to

represent the Bennetts, father and son, for over fifty years. Now, what I want to say in advance is, that Mr. Bennett ought to have been here himself to have had the pleasure of seeing this grand and glorious celebration, mainly the work of his hand—his generous gift—but if I were at liberty to tell you all that Mr. Bennett does in the way of generosity, this little gift of this little monument would be a very little, insignificant thing, compared to all that he has done. I might tell you of many things that would show you that this gift, beautiful as it is, is a very small thing in comparison with many of the public-spirited acts and many of the charities of my client; and I wish he were here to-day to see how the people of New York appreciate it.

"Mr. Bennett was a boy playing on these grounds. His father and his mother lived here. It has been his residence since manhood, but the exigencies of his business, as he believes, call him for a residence abroad. He has been criticized, and harshly sometimes, because he has chosen to make his residence in a foreign country. Mr. Bennett, as you all know, is the owner of the *New York Herald*. He has raised it from being, when I first knew it, a very small sheet of small circulation, to perhaps the greatest newspaper on the globe. I venture to say that it goes into every part of the world—Kamschatka and elsewhere—and I venture to say that there is no other paper which is looked upon with so much trust as the *Herald*.

"I was once on a visit to Mr. Bennett on Long Island, and we were sitting on the piazza admiring the surrounding view, when two of his sons drove up. It was Sunday morning and he did not ask them, 'How are you Jim and Tom?' but 'what does the *Herald* say about such-and-such a thing?'

"I am sure that when the news of this great meeting reaches him it will be very gratifying to him. He will feel that though he has chosen to take up his residence abroad, there is still a feeling of respect for him when they come to see the good work of his hands. Now I don't pretend, after the very eloquent and learned address on the history of the American Revolution that you have just heard, I don't expect to take up your time, as there are gentlemen to follow me who will interest you more than I can do. I will only say that I am thankful to you for having listened to me so patiently. I am much obliged to you and thank you, and I retire wishing I could have done better."

BY THE PRESIDENT: "The man who spoke when the memorial was dedicated down below is a son of the next gentleman to address you. The Hon. Randolph Guggenheimer was on that occasion speaking for The City of New York. The Hon. Andrew H. Green is the 'Father of Greater New York.' He is the father of most everything that is good

that I know of. He is to The City of New York what Gladstone was to England, her 'Grand Old Man.' "

ADDRESS BY THE HON. ANDREW H. GREEN.

"It is difficult on an occasion as suggestive and inspiring as this, to select from the multitude of thoughts that crowd for utterance the few that can adequately be expressed within the necessarily brief limits of time allowed.

"In the Battle of Fort Washington we have a conspicuous illustration of the close alliance between the scenic and historic elements which form the two-fold character of the society for which I have the honor to speak.

"It is a remarkable and interesting fact, so nearly universal as to warrant its interpretation as the expression of an underlying principle, that the great conflicts of mankind have been identified with conspicuous features of natural scenery. It is a well-known fact that rugged scenery and stimulating climate make a rugged and virile people; and a virile people make vigorous history. Among such a people, the physical features of the landscape which make impress on their moral characters afford the salient points from which to exercise their genius. This is notably the truth with regard to military engagements, and many of the great battles of history have been associated with picturesque topographical features.

"The territory over which the Battle of Fort Washington was fought 125 years ago, some three or four square miles in extent, comprises the most picturesque portion of The City of New York. It is the highest, boldest, and most diversified section of our ancient city, and it commands a combined view of land and water, of city and country, unsurpassed in the United States. It is the only portion of Manhattan Island where the shore-line of our beautiful American Rhine has been left in its native picturesqueness, and it is the only portion where any trace of its pristine beauty remains undecorated and unrazed by the levelling march of so-called 'public improvements.'

"Thirty-six years ago, impressed with the commanding beauty of this section, I urged upon the authorities the creation here of a great park, which should preserve for future generations those inestimable endowments of beauty with which Nature blessed this island; and since then, about forty one acres have been set aside and reserved as 'Fort Washington Park,' on the western side of the Boulevard Lafayette. But the half of what should be done has not yet been done. In 1896 the Legislature passed a bill for the erection of a park on that slightly eminence where Baxter made his brave fight and lost his life 125 years

ago to-day; but, although it was passed by the Legislature with great unanimity, it failed for the unexplained lack of Governor Morton's signature. North of Inwood and west of Kingsbridge road there is still another place of sylvan beauty, of which few have any conception, where, as Bryant says,

"Upon earth's bosom yet  
After the flight of untold centuries  
The freshness of her far beginning lies"—

a place as yet saved on this island where he "who in the love of Nature, holds communion with her visible forms," can go and hear the "various language" which she speaks. I most earnestly hope that that lovely spot, still undesecrated by the woodman's axe or the engineer's projects, may be preserved for a city park for which it is especially adapted.

"Woodman, spare that tree,  
Touch not a single bough."

"But these few remaining garden spots must be saved now or it will be too late. Within a short time the barrier of distance, which hitherto has been Nature's protection, will have been swept away; the irresistible flood of an already congested population will sweep over those few square miles, and their multitudinous dwellings will obliterate the last vestige of that once most varied and attractive landscape.

"Let us turn now from the scenic to one phase of the historic side of this occasion, suggested by the generous and public-spirited donor\* of the memorial which we have dedicated, namely, the debt of the American Press to the American Revolution, and the debt of the American people to the representative American Press.

"Our nation owes its greatness principally to three great forces—the free church, the free school and the free press. The first represents emancipated conscience; the second, its intelligent illumination; the third, its free expression. Without those three factors a democracy would be like a sightless giant, staggering in darkness.

"The American Free Press is the special product of the American Revolution. And let me say that by 'free press' I do not mean a licentious press, for 'free press' is no more a synonym for 'licentiousness' than 'freeman' is synonymous with 'anarchist.'

"At the time of the Battle of Fort Washington there were but thirty-seven newspapers in the United States. The colonial press obeyed despotic authority; it was thrust into prison if it did not. It had no opinions of its own, and its subserviency robbed it of all value as a free moral agent. To-day there are 20,879 newspapers in this country, nearly one-half the number printed in the entire world. There

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\* James Gordon Bennett.

is not another such newspaper-reading people on the face of the earth, not another great nation with so small a percentage of illiteracy, not another rendered so capable by untrammelled conscience, liberal education and an enfranchised press, to exercise and enjoy the blessings of a 'government by the people for the people.'

"If we owe our democratic liberties to the American Revolution, yet Peace hath her victories no less renowned than War.; and the pen, rightly wielded, is as mighty to preserve as the sword to create. It would be difficult to overestimate the power of the press as one of the chief conservators of the Republic, or our debt to men like James Gordon Bennett, William Cullen Bryant, Charles A. Dana, Horace Greeley, Hugh Hastings, Henry J. Raymond, Noah Webster and Thurlow Weed, and their distinguished successors, who, though differing in their point of view on minor questions, have been inspired by the single and lofty desire to preserve and improve the heritage of the fathers. Panoplied with a liberal education by our free school system, and wielding the unsheathed sword of a free conscience, they have stood like armed priests, ministering at and defending the third altar of our American liberties.

"It is extremely appropriate, then, that a representative of the American Press should give the beautiful and enduring memorial which we have dedicated to-day, and which, while commemorating the sacrifices that have made this spot sacred to all Americans, will also stand as a renewed evidence of the public spirit and pride in American citizenship which a distinguished father and son have illustrated and cultivated, through the instrumentality of an enlightened public press, for three-quarters of a century.

"In conclusion, I am reminded, by this place of meeting, of the olden days, when the civilization of the world bordered the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, when important cities of Greece or Asia Minor contained a hill, or elevated rock, the fortified and templed summit of which commanded and could be seen from the city and its environs. This acropolis, or 'high town,' was not only a citadel of defence, but also a place of self-consecration for the inhabitants.

"To-day you are assembled on the very highest point of Manhattan Island, the crowning elevation of the imperial city of the New World, upon a mount made sacred by the blood of your forefathers and adorned by the most illustrious name in American history. Here, upon Mount Washington, the acropolis of New York, 'et us consecrate ourselves and our city, not as the Athenians to a pagan goddess, but rather to those high qualities which she personified, and thus shall our queenly city be the home of wisdom, beauty, justice and purity, and the higher arts, and be 'the crowning city, the mart of nations.'"



The New York Juvenile Asylum Band then played a patriotic air, during which the United States troops, which had been standing at the side of the tent, withdrew preparatory to returning to Governor's Island.

By THE PRESIDENT: "We had expected to have had with us to-day Major-General John A. Brooke, U. S. A., as a representative of the Army that fought in the Civil and Spanish Wars as bravely as the Army of the Revolution fought at Bunker Hill, Fort Washington or Yorktown, and we regret that illness prevents his presence. Those soldiers who are just marching away, however, are excellent representatives of their distinguished Commander, and they can be depended upon to do their duty whenever their country has anything for them to do."

The President then introduced the next speaker, with the following words: "The thing that I boast of most of all is that I once had a lawsuit with Judge Sawyer and did not get entirely beaten. Judge Sawyer is the Historian of the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, and is a gentleman I am very proud to present to you to-day."

ADDRESS BY HON. AZARIAH HALL SAWYER.

"We are assembled here to-day on the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Washington to dedicate a suitable memorial to the valor of our Revolutionary ancestors, who fought, and many of whom died, upon this historic ground. The memorial is an expression of the generosity and patriotism of Mr. James Gordon Bennett, given at the request of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society in co-operation with the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

"The Battle of Fort Washington occurred at one of the darkest periods of the Revolution. It is impossible for us to-day to realize fully the enormous difficulties which at that time beset General Washington on every side. His army was composed of men enlisted for short terms of a few months only, or of the militia summoned for some specific purpose, as the defense of some point within the colony furnishing the troops. They were largely raw and inexperienced men, and not even properly clothed. Their officers were not only inexperienced, but many of them were jealous of Washington, not disposed to accept or be guided by his judgment, and covertly endeavoring to undermine and destroy his power and influence. It was no wonder, then, that they were unwilling to yield their own opinions to the clear and unerring judgment of the commander-in-chief. This was especially the case in respect to the disposition that should be made of Fort Washington.

"Weeks before the battle Washington saw that it would be impossible to hold the fort which bore his name, and when, on November 6th, a frigate and two transports passed up the river with but little injury from the guns of the fort, the uselessness of obeying the commands of Congress to 'defend it to the last' was so apparent that on the 8th he wrote to General Greene, his most trusted lieutenant, as follows: 'The passage of the three vessels up the North River is so plain a proof of the inefficiency of all the obstructions thrown into it, that it will fully justify a change in the disposition. If we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post from which the expected benefit cannot be had? I am, therefore, inclined to think that it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Mount Washington: but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders as to evacuating Mount Washington, as you may judge best, and so far revoking the order given to Colonel Magaw, to defend it to the last. So far as can be collected from the various sources of intelligence, the enemy must design a penetration into Jersey, and to fall upon your post. You will, therefore, immediately have all the stores removed which you do not deem necessary for your defence.'

"These orders would seem to have been sufficiently explicit, but General Greene chose to consider them entirely discretionary. General Putnam, who had built the fort, was absolutely confident of its ability to withstand any attack, and Colonel Magaw, who was in command, declared that it could hold out under siege until December. General Greene, therefore, instead of evacuating, sent over large reinforcements, left unrevoked the order to defend it to the last extremity, and in a direct report to Congress encouraged that body to believe that the attempt of Howe to possess himself of it would fail.

"Washington arrived at Fort Lee on the 13th and found, to his great grief, what Greene had done. The afternoon of the 15th, Howe summoned Magaw to surrender Fort Washington, on pain of the garrison's being put to the sword. Magaw, in his reply, intimated a doubt that Howe would execute a threat 'so unworthy of himself and the British nation; but give me leave,' he added 'to assure His Excellency that, *actuated by the most glorious cause that mankind ever fought in, I am determined to defend this post to the very last extremity.*'

"Apprised by the Colonel of his peril, General Greene sent over reinforcements, with an exhortation to him to persist in his defense; and dispatched an express to Washington, who was at Hackensack, where the troops which had crossed from Peekskill were encamped. It was nightfall when Washington arrived at Fort Lee. Greene and Putnam were over at the besieged fortress. He threw himself into a boat and

Had partly crossed the river, when he met those generals returning. They informed him of the garrison's having been reinforced, and assured him that it was in high spirits and capable of making a good defense. It was with difficulty, however, they could prevail on him to return with them to the Jersey shore.

“Early next morning Magaw made his dispositions for the expected attack. The grounds which he was charged to defend reached from the hills above Tubby Hook to a zig-zag line a little south of the present Trinity cemetery, a distance north and south of two and a half miles, a circuit of six or seven. His forces, with the recent addition, amounted to nearly 3,000 men, the fort not containing above a third of that number.

“Colonel Lambert Cadwalader, with 800 Pennsylvanians, was posted at the outer lines, about two and a half miles south of the fort—the side menaced by Lord Percy with 1,000 men. Colonel Rawlings, of Maryland, with a body of troops, many of them riflemen, was stationed by a three-gun battery on a rocky, precipitous hill north of the fort and between it and Spuyten Duyvil creek. Colonel Baxter, of Bucks county, Pennsylvania, with his regiment of militia, was posted east of the fort, on rough, wooded heights bordering the Harlem river, to watch the motions of the enemy, who had thrown up redoubts on high and commanding ground, on the opposite side of the river, apparently to cover the crossing and landing of troops.

“Sir William Howe had planned four simultaneous attacks: One on the north, by Knyphausen, who was encamped on the York side of Kings Bridge, within cannonshot of Fort Washington, but separated from it by high and rough hills covered with almost impenetrable woods. He was to advance in two columns, formed of detachments made from the Hessians of his corps, the brigade of Rahl, and the regiment of Waldeckers. The second attack was to be by two battalions of light infantry and two battalions of guards, under Brigadier-General Mathew, who was to cross Harlem river in flat boats, under cover of the redoubts on the heights, and to land on the right of the fort. This attack was to be supported by the First and Second Grenadiers and a regiment of light infantry under command of Lord Cornwallis. The third attack, intended as a feint, to distract the attention of the Americans, was to be by Colonel Stirling, with the Forty-second regiment, who was to drop down Harlem river in bateaux, to the left of the American lines, facing New York. The fourth attack was to be on the south, by Lord Percy, with the English and Hessian troops under his command, on the right flank of the American entrenchments.

“About noon a heavy cannonading thundering along the rocky hills, and sharp volleys of musketry, proclaimed that the action was

commenced. Knyphausen's division, consisting of nearly 4,500 men, was pushing on from the north in two columns, as had been arranged. The right was led by Colonel Rahl; the left by himself. Rahl essayed to mount a steep, broken height called Cock Hill, which rises from Spuyten Duyvil creek and was covered with woods. Knyphausen undertook a hill rising from the Kings Bridge road, but soon found himself entangled in a wooded defile, difficult to penetrate, and where his Hessians were exposed to the fire of the three-gun battery and Rawlings' Riflemen.

"While this was going on at the north of the fort, General Mathew, with his light infantry and guards, crossed Harlem river in the flat boats, under cover of a heavy fire from the redoubts.

"He made good his landing, after being severely handled by Baxter and his men from behind rocks and trees and the breastworks thrown up on the steep river bank. A short contest ensued. Baxter, while bravely encouraging his men, was killed by a British officer. His troops, overpowered by numbers, retreated to the fort. General Mathew now pushed on with his guards and light infantry to cut off Cadwalader. That officer had gallantly defended the lines against the attack of Lord Percy from the south, who had advanced from what is now One hundred and Twenty-fifth street, until informed that Colonel Stirling was dropping down Harlem river in bateaux to flank the line and take him in the rear. He sent off a detachment to oppose his landing. They did it manfully. About ninety of Stirling's men were killed or wounded in their boats; but he persevered, landed and forced his way up a steep height, which was well defended, gained the summit, forced a redoubt and took nearly two hundred prisoners. Thus doubly assailed, Cadwalader was obliged to retreat to the fort. He was closely pursued by Percy, with the English troops and Hessians, but turned repeatedly on his pursuers. Thus he fought his way to the fort, with a loss of several killed and more taken prisoners, but marking his track by the number of Hessians slain.

"The defense on the north side of the fort was equally obstinate and unsuccessful. Rawlings, with his Maryland Riflemen and the aid of the three-gun battery, however, for some time kept the left column of Hessians and Waldeckers, under Knyphausen, at bay. At length, Colonel Rahl, with the right column of the division, having forced his way directly up the north side of the steep hill at Spuyten Duyvil creek, came upon Rawlings' men, whose rifles, from frequent discharges, had become foul and almost useless, drove them from their strong post and followed them until within one hundred yards of the fort, where he was joined by Knyphausen, who had slowly made his way through the dense

forest and over felled trees. Here they took post behind a large stone house and sent in a flag with a second summons to surrender.

"Washington, surrounded by several of his officers, had been an anxious spectator of the battle from the opposite side of the Hudson. Much of it was hidden from him by intervening hills and forest, but the roar of cannonry from the valley of Harlem river, the sharp and incessant report of rifles and the smoke rising above the tree-tops, told him of the spirit with which the assault was received at various points and gave him, for a time, a hope that the defense might be successful. The action about the lines to the south lay open to him and could be distinctly seen through a telescope, and nothing encouraged him more than the gallant style in which Cadwalader, with an inferior force, maintained his position. When he saw him, however, assailed in flank, the line broken and his troops overpowered by numbers, retreating to the fort, he gave up the game as lost. The worst sight of all was to behold his men cut down and bayoneted by the Hessians while begging quarter. It is said so completely to have overcome him that he wept with the tenderness of a child.

"Seeing the flag go into the fort from Knyphausen's division and surmising it to be a summons to surrender, he wrote a note to Magaw telling him that if he could hold out until evening and the place could not be maintained, he would endeavor to bring off the garrison in the night. Captain Gooch, of Boston, a brave and daring man, offered to be the bearer of the note. He ran down to the river, jumped into a small boat, pushed over the river, landed under the bank, ran up to the fort and delivered the message, came out, ran and jumped over the broken ground, dodging the Hessians, some of whom struck at him with their pieces, and others attempted to thrust him with their bayonets, escaped through them, got to his boat and returned to Fort Lee.

"Washington's message arrived too late. The fort was so crowded by the garrison and the troops which had retreated into it that it was difficult to move about. The enemy, too, were in possession of the little redoubts around and could have poured in showers of shells and ricochet balls that would have made dreadful slaughter. It was no longer possible for Magaw to get his troops to man the lines. He was compelled, therefore, to yield himself and his garrison prisoners of war, the only terms granted them being that the men could retain their baggage and the officers their swords.

"The killed and wounded of the German troops were more than 350; those of the whole Royal Army, more than 500. The Americans lost in the field not above 150, but they gave up valuable artillery and some of their best arms, and the captives exceeded 2,600, of whom one-half were well-trained soldiers.

"The capture of Fort Washington was the most serious disaster that had befallen our cause, but it carried with it no dishonor. We see clearly, to-day, the wisdom of Washington's policy of prudence, and regret that his advice was not followed and the loss of so many lives and the capture of so many brave men, so sadly needed then, avoided. But, still, it is satisfaction to remember that this important post was not abandoned without a contest, and that we fought a brave, if unsuccessful, battle.

"Gentlemen, it is the spirit of our nation to fight. We may not always win, but we will not surrender without a struggle. We have been fighting ever since the Battle of Fort Washington, and so long as this nation exists, so long will we continue to fight. I do not mean that disputes between nations are always to be settled by an armed conflict. I trust that the day is rapidly approaching when international wars will cease, and arbitration will be the court of last resort. But I do mean that the old fighting spirit of our Anglo-Saxon race must never die—the brave spirit which will make every sacrifice to win the victory for the righteous cause.

"There are other victories than those of the battlefield. Thousands of us are ready at our country's call to bind on our swords and go forth 'to glory and the grave;' but are we willing to stand for hours in the rain and cold, before a voting booth, to fire our one shot in the fight for honest and pure government? Are we willing to sacrifice wealth and honor in an assured profession, that we may fight the good fight upon the floors of our National or State Legislatures? Are we willing to do our share in the grand fight for the redemption and purification of our municipal governments? Are we willing to leave our homes, our friends, all that makes life dear to us, and go out to our distant possessions, there to labor patiently, honestly, and with all our might, in the grand fight against ignorance and disease, knowing that, added to unjust criticism at home, we will

"Reap the old reward,  
The blame of those we better,  
The hate of those we guard,  
The cry of hosts we humor  
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—  
Why brought ye us from bondage,  
Our loved Egyptian night?"

"There never was a time, gentlemen, when our country needed the fighting qualities of her sons more than to-day. Ever since the Battle of Fort Washington, our democratic government has been on trial before

the world. At no period in our history has our country occupied the exalted place that it does to-day. For years we have been the granary of the world; now we are contesting successfully with England, Germany and France for the pre-eminence in manufacturing products. We aspire to be, if we have not already become, the financial centre of the world. We cannot maintain this proud pre-eminence in the eyes of the world unless we are ready and willing to fight for it; not as our forefathers fought on this historic ground one hundred and twenty-five years ago, but fight against ignorance, vice and dishonesty.

"For years we have been taunted with the fact—for it is a fact—that our most intelligent and cultivated citizens were unwilling to take part in a struggle for good government, but seemed to be quite ready, so long as they were not personally interfered with, to be governed by the worst elements of society—until the government of some of our cities has become a by-word and a hissing, not only through our own land but through the civilized world. This state of things cannot long continue without the most serious consequences. Our municipal governments lie at the very source of our whole governmental system. If the source is contaminated it must in time corrupt the whole system.

"It was well said by ex-President Cleveland, in his address at Pittsburg the other day, that 'if the American people are to preserve in their greatest usefulness the advantages of their free institutions, every individual, whatever may be his station or situation, owes some sort of duty and obligation in support of good citizenship.'

"I believe that the people of this great city have begun to realize their duty in this regard. The events of the last few days have demonstrated their power and at the same time established their responsibility.

"If the people of this land are willing to take up the burdens that belong to and are inseparable from good citizenship, then, indeed, our fathers who fought at Fort Washington did not fight in vain, and 'government of the people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.'"

The New York Juvenile Asylum Band then played another patriotic air, after which the President introduced Dr. P. Brynberg Porter, who read the following poem:

POEM BY DR. P. BRYNBERG PORTER.

FORT WASHINGTON, 1776-1901.

When from the ramparts on these storied heights  
The gallant patriots' tattered flag was torn,  
The darkest hour of all the war had come—  
Yet in the night that fell new hope was born.

This stalwart fortress with its worship'd name  
Could not, alas, base treachery withstand.  
Sad was the sacrifice of noble lives,  
And brave our troops that felt the conqueror's hand.

But balm there is in tears for those whose graves  
Hallow this spot; for those who in their pain  
Cried out for death in ghastly prison ships—  
Their sacrifice, undying, was not vain.

Trenton and Princeton followed this reverse.  
The nation woke to find itself thrice blessed  
With a great leader in its midst, on whom  
Its hopes and aspirations well might rest.

The spirit of the people was revived,  
They girded up their loins for long strife,  
And the resistless force of Freedom's cause  
Now stirred into a new and stronger life.

Enriched with boundless blessings won by those  
Who fought so well in deathless days of yore,  
Well may memorials to their valor here  
Be set by us on Hudson's sacred shore.

And as the passer-by shall pause, perchance,  
To meditate on this historic site,  
From out the memories of that darkest hour  
Will shine "At eventide it shall be light."



BY THE PRESIDENT: "Judge Steele is one whose ancestor commanded a regiment at the Battle of Long Island, and was with Washington when he crossed the Delaware. Judge Steele went into the Civil War as a private and came out with a high rank, and merited all the honors he had won during the war."

## ADDRESS BY HON. HIRAM ROSWELL STEELE.

"It is certainly a pleasure to find so large a gathering of patriotic men and women who are ready to stop for a moment in these busy times to give attention to events connected with the early days of the Republic; to refresh our knowledge of local history, and join in measures to preserve the landmarks which tell the story of the valor shown and the sacrifices made by our ancestors, and which gave to us the rich inheritance we enjoy to-day.

"We are making history so rapidly these days; there is so much of importance in current events to absorb our attention, that we are in danger of forgetting the glorious past. The Civil War is fresh in the minds of those of us who participated in that struggle; but I am told that it is not uncommon to meet graduates of our universities of a later generation who are quite ignorant of the history of that most important struggle of modern times. I heard the other day of a young college graduate, who, no doubt, was well informed as to ancient history as sung by Virgil and Homer, who asked General Sickles where he lost his leg. The veteran commander of the old Third Corps could hardly conceal his disgust as he said: 'Young man, don't you know the history of your country?' The youth replied: 'I did know where you lost your leg, but I have forgotten. Won't you please tell me?' To which the General replied: 'I lost my leg at Bunker Hill, young man, and don't you forget it again.'

"From the splendid addresses we have heard here to-day, and the literature distributed in connection with this occasion, we ought to be familiar with the history of Fort Washington. We know that it was a five-sided earthwork, without casements or outpost, mounting 34 cannon on the crest of these heights where we now stand, 238 feet above the Hudson river; that it was built in the summer of 1776 under the supervision of General Greene for the purpose of holding the Hudson river; that it was planned and laid out by Alexander Hamilton, and that Washington was so much pleased with the work that he sent for Hamilton and placed him on his staff. We know that it was captured by the British 125 years ago to-day while garrisoned by Pennsylvania militia under command of Colonel Magaw; that the honors of the day were given to the Hessians and Highlanders, and that Colonel Rahl, who led

the Hessians in the final assault, was distinguished in general orders for his gallant conduct on that occasion; that the name of the fort was then changed to 'Fort Knyphausen,' in honor of Lieutenant-General Knyphausen, the Hessian Commander; and it would be well to remember also, in passing, that these same Hessians, including the Knyphausen regiment, were captured by Washington in the following month at Trenton on December 26, and that Colonel Rahl was seriously wounded in that engagement.

"The weeks immediately preceding the capture of this fort were perhaps the most gloomy and discouraging in all of Washington's experience. With the occupation of lower New York by Howe's army, and after the British war ships had forced the passage of the Hudson and East rivers, Washington saw that his position on Harlem Heights was untenable, and he advised the immediate evacuation of Fort Washington. But Congress had not then learned to regard Washington as it did a few months later. His appeals and earnest recommendations were received with scant respect, and generally referred to a committee or promptly disregarded. The advice of others controlled, and Congress ordered that Fort Washington be held at all hazards. About this time, Washington is reported to have said privately: 'Such is my situation that if I were to wish the bitterest curse to an enemy on this side of the grave, I should put him in my place, with my feelings.'

"Washington was confronted by the strongest army which had ever left the shores of Great Britain up to that time, while his own force consisted of untrained farmers, poorly supplied, and serving practically without pay. Then it must be remembered that the colonists at this time were not at all united in their revolt against the home government. It is evident that a very large percentage of the people of New York City remained loyal to the English Government, from the fact that at the close of the war and before the evacuation by the British Army, 14,000 loyalists were sent from New York City to Shelbourne, Nova Scotia, while many others returned to England. It was not easy for the peaceful farmer to leave his family and take up arms against the government which he had been taught to love and respect; but it was a part of the divine plan that a free people should be established on this continent, and Providence furnished the means to accomplish the result.

"The two things which undoubtedly contributed most to unite the colonists and arouse them to action were the cruel outrages of the Indians operating with Burgoyne's Army, and the marauding of the Hessian hirelings. The murder of Jane MacCrea had a wonderful effect upon the farmers of western New York and the New England States. You remember the story. This beautiful girl, twenty years of age, betrothed to a loyalist in the British Army, was sent on the 27th of June,

1777, from Fort Edward to the British camp at Sandy Hill, under the escort of two Indians attached to Burgoyne's Army. On the way, the Indians quarreled as to the division of the reward they were to receive, and settled the dispute by driving their tomahawks into the brain of this girl; and the British commander, fearful of displeasing his Indian allies, pardoned the assassins without any punishment whatever. The news of this horrible affair, together with the constant murder and scalping of defenceless women and children by Indians operating under the British flag, settled the course of the wavering people of western New York and New England, and did more to rouse them to immediate action than all the patriotic appeals of the previous year. Volunteers, by forced marches through the wilderness, joined General Gates in such numbers as to compel the surrender of Burgoyne's Army.

"In the meantime, the Hessians, operating in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland, robbing and plundering indiscriminately, Rebels and Tories alike, united and roused the patriots of these states to determined action; while the British commanders, when complaints were brought to their notice, excused themselves by saying that the Hessians were hired with the understanding that they would have an opportunity to enrich themselves by plundering the people, and that it would not be fair to deprive them of this privilege.

"I firmly believe that in all these events, as well as those of more recent times, the American people have been the unconscious instrument of a divine power in working out a great plan for the uplifting of humanity, far beyond anything we can comprehend.

"At the close of the Revolutionary War, the Alleghanies were our western boundaries, and our statesmen and government of that day thought it was all the territory we required. It is easy to see now that our statesmen of that day were wrong, and that every expansion of our territory has benefited mankind and tended to the building up of a great and useful nation. If it had been proposed in the McKinley campaign of 1896, that within four years we should take a controlling position in the Pacific Ocean, establishing our flag in the Hawaiias and Philipines, exercising control over more than twelve millions of people, the idea would have been regarded too preposterous for a moment's consideration. Nothing could have been further from President McKinley's wish or intention. Still it has all come about in the most natural way—in fact, forced upon us by circumstances beyond our control; and when we consider the position, resources and intelligence of the American people, that the Pacific Ocean occupies about the same relative position to the world's civilization of to-day that the Mediterranean did in the middle ages, it is impossible to imagine how far the power and influence of this Republic may extend during the present century.

"We are to be congratulated upon your being with us so long to-day, and I shall not talk any longer. I want to express our gratitude, before I take my seat, to Mr. James Gordon Bennett for his generous gift. All honor, I say, to him and to the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, and to the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society who have joined us in commemorating the Battle of Fort Washington."

Judge Steele's address concluded the programme as arranged. The President then introduced Prof. Fitzgerald Tisdall, with the following words:

"The most gallant figure of the Revolution, to my mind, is Colonel Magaw; and I say that, well remembering Putnam and Warren at Bunker Hill, and Anthony Wayne at Stony Point, and Alexander Hamilton at Yorktown. But Colonel Magaw held the fort here against overwhelming odds and against a sure defeat. Colonel Magaw, to my mind, stands out as the sublime, personal hero of the Revolution. We have with us to-day, Professor Tisdall, a lineal descendant of the man who commanded this fort during the Battle of Fort Washington. He has made his own way in the world without any help from his ancestors, and is now Professor of Greek in the College of The City of New York."

REMARKS BY PROF. FITZGERALD TISDALL.

"It gave me great pleasure to accept the invitation of President Logan and the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, to be present to-day at these services, in which I did not expect to take part. But it may be interesting to the women present to know that although my name is different, I am a lineal descendant of Colonel Magaw, and it is proper that you should know something about him. He went from Carlisle, Penna., to the siege of Boston, and then, after the British left Boston, he went to Long Island and fought in the battle there, and then following in the retreat of Washington's forces, he was left as Senior Colonel in command of Fort Washington. He was taken prisoner, and the family records are, as I have heard from my grandmother who was his grand-daughter, he was confined in the prison ship 'Jersey,' and owing to the provisions and ill treatment there, his constitution was very seriously undermined."

He concluded his speech by referring to Colonel Magaw's marriage while in captivity at Flatbush, Long Island, and to his death in 1790, which was indirectly caused by his treatment while on the British prison ships, and which took place in the prime of life, when years of usefulness to his country seemed to be in store for him.

The President then introduced Compatriot Edward Hagaman Hall as the person who had practically rediscovered the almost forgotten site of Fort Washington, who had first proposed the monumenting of the spot in 1897, and whose indefatigable efforts had finally resulted in evoking Mr. Bennett's generosity and securing the erection of the memorial.

## REMARKS BY MR. EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL.

"I did not expect to be called upon for any remarks here to-day. Mr. Logan, in dragging me up before you in this manner, has exposed himself to the danger of the fisherman who once lived in the East. This fisherman used to haul up pretty good fish on some occasions—and some pretty poor fish on others. One day, after removing all the fish from his net, he found in the bottom of it a strange-looking vessel. Not knowing what it contained, and overcome by curiosity, he pulled up the vessel and unsealed it, whereupon, to his amazement and horror, forth came a great and expansive vapor, which gathered in an overshadowing cloud in the shape of a genie, shutting out the light that had been shining and converting the day into night. When he saw what he had done he tried to induce the genie to go back into the vessel, but without success, and he repented him of his rash act for many years.

"I am so full of the subject of Fort Washington that if I fairly started once upon it, you would regret that Mr. Logan ever let me loose, but I shall show my friendship for him and my consideration for you by saving you from the penalty of his indiscretion.

"The Battlefield of Fort Washington has already been hallowed by the sacrifices of our forefathers, and no words that we can utter here to-day can render it more sacred. Let us be grateful that through the generosity of our patriotic fellow citizen, Mr. James Gordon Bennett, and aided by the genius of our talented Compatriot, Mr. Charles Rollinson Lamb, we have been enabled to set upon this consecrated spot a beautiful memorial to tell its inspiring story to generations that are to come."

The President then introduced Mr. Charles Rollinson Lamb, not only as the designer of the Fort Washington monument, but also as a representative of the highest art culture in the city, and the designer of the superb Triumphal Arch erected in 1899 to commemorate Dewey's victory at Manila and other triumphs of the American Navy.

## REMARKS BY MR. CHARLES ROLLINSON LAMB.

"The unexpected is what always happens. The only reason I am going to say anything is because it has not been given the publicity that it should have received on such a day as this, and that is the indebtedness that each member of our Society is under to our Secretary, Mr. Hall. Without his careful research, without his persistent way, his constant endeavor, Fort Washington would have remained unmarked, possibly for years to come. Fortunately for him, fortunately for you, he was backed up by that royal, good fellow (whom down in the National Arts Club we call an artist, while here he pretends to be a lawyer), that prince of good fellows, President Logan.

"My part is simple. I have only to put together a few materials under instructions as to where they are to go, and what is wanted. What they commemorate is inscribed on the face of your memorial. One fact that I hope will be taken away by you all, and especially by the younger people whom I am glad to see with us to-day, is that we, too, are making history, and it is important that we remember that in making history, we should make it so that in the years to come it will be worthy of being inscribed on tablets of marble, stone or granite, and which can truthfully say of to-day what we say of our forefathers, that we are proud to be descendants of such a race of men."

After a few remarks appropriate to the day by Mrs. Donald McLean, the audience dispersed.

## PART III.

FORT WASHINGTON AND ITS RELATED  
FORTIFICATIONS.\*

BY EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL.

THE object of this brief sketch is to indicate with exactness the site of Fort Washington, on Manhattan Island, and to rescue from threatened oblivion the location of the spot made memorable by the gallant defense of the Americans, November 16, 1776. The growth of the city, the march of improvements, and action of the elements have so obliterated the historic landmarks of the island, that few vestiges remain to remind the present generation of the Revolutionary period. These natural influences have been supplemented in their operation upon the site of Fort Washington by the indefiniteness with which map-makers have applied their designations to the charts of the island, and popular opinion has already entered the penumbra of uncertainty which fore-shadows complete loss of identity. Upon a "Map of the Upper Part of the Island of Manhattan, above Eighty-sixth street, arranged to illustrate the Battle of Harlem Heights," in Shannon's Manual for 1868, the name F-o-r-t W-a-s-h-i-n-g-t-o-n is spread over a territory nearly two miles in extent, north of 160th street. On Rand & McNally's "Complete Map of New York and Vicinity," 1895, the Fort is not designated; but Jeffrey's Hook, projecting into the Hudson river in a line with what would be 176th street if it were opened, bears the additional appellation of "Fort Washington Point." This is a commonly used name for Jeffrey's Hook, and the consequent tendency to locate the Fort there is so strong that the Point has become a very general synonym for the Fort. On the maps printed for the City Directory the name "Fort Washington" occupies the territory between the Fort Washington Ridge road (latterly called Fort Washington avenue) and the Hudson river in a line with 178th street if projected. Errors in Lossing's "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution," which locate the Hamilton Grange at 151st street instead of 142d, and Washington's Headquarters (the Jumel Mansion) at 169th street instead of 160th; and in Mrs. Lamb's "History of New York," which makes Harlem Heights and Mount Washington synonymous and locate the Battle of Harlem Heights in the vicinity of Trinity

\* Reprinted from the brochure of the Empire State Society Sons of American Revolution, entitled "Fort Washington," published in 1898.

Cemetery instead of Morningside Heights, compel us to seek outside evidence to confirm the location of Fort Washington. Fortunately there remain sufficiently distinct traces of the Fort to fix its site with exactness.

An observer stationed at the intersection of Eleventh avenue and 183d street, with a compass corrected for magnetic deviation, will find that the avenue runs about 29 degrees east of north,\* and the street 61 degrees west of north†—an angle of 90 degrees. If he will proceed to the point where the western curb-line of Fort Washington avenue would be intersected by the line of the southern sidewalk of 183d street if projected, and walk thence 356 feet in the direction of the continuance of the line, he will stand on what remains of the NW bastion of the Fort. This bastion is rapidly wearing away under the action of the weather, and in former years, after a rainstorm, it was not unusual to see cannon-balls and other relics roll out of the bank. Looking a few degrees west of south from the NW bastion, one may see, 162 feet distant, the extremity of the SW bastion, wholly covered with verdure and in a much better state of preservation. It commands a superb view of the Hudson and the Palisades on the Jersey shore. These two bastions are all that remains of Fort Washington, but they are enough to enable us to locate the obliterated portions by the means of existing diagrams. Plotting the Fort, according to the plans obtainable, it is found that James Gordon Bennett's house lies close to the N bastion; that an unoccupied house stands upon the site of the SE bastion, and that the old Four-in-Hand Club House, built some thirty years ago, stands between the NW and SW bastions, where additional room has been made for it by blasting. In grading the western sidewalk of Fort Washington avenue, the ground of the NE bastion must have been partially cut away, and possibly the foot of the SE bastion.

One hundred and fifty feet north of the intersection of the western curb-line of Fort Washington avenue with the southern line of 183d street projected is the crest of Fort Washington avenue roadway and the entrance to the driveway into the premises of Mr. Bennett. An arch spanning the avenue upon this eminence would command a view of all the northern portion of Manhattan Island and a sweeping prospect beyond the Harlem river into Westchester county and Connecticut. A few rods north of the Fort is the highest point on Manhattan Island, the elevation being 271.4 feet. The extent of the view may be inferred from the fact that it was here that Hassler, in his famous trigonometrical coast survey, fixed one of his stations, the next being in the State of Connecticut. To the eastward and westward of Fort Washington the

\* 28°, 50', 30". † 61°, 0', 30".



ground declines sharply, being steeper on the west than on the east. To the southward the grade falls away more gradually. To the northward the ridge maintains a high elevation for about six-tenths of a mile when at the site of Fort Tryon it falls away precipitately.

Although Fort Washington possessed a natural advantage of elevation, it was not constructively a strong military work. It is described as a "pentagonal, bastioned earthwork, without a keep, having a feeble profile and scarcely any ditch. In its vicinity were batteries, redoubts and intrenched lines." The diagram of the Fort in Lossing's "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution" also represents the Fort surrounded by an abattis. Carrington, in his "Battles of the American Revolution," says: "Fort Washington was a hastily built open earthwork and, according to Graydon, without a ditch of any consequence, and with no exterior defenses that could entitle it to the name of a fortress in any degree capable of sustaining a siege. There was no well within the Fort proper, so that water was procurable only from the Hudson river nearly 300 feet below." The river was really about 1,000 feet distant.

Major Alexander Graydon, whose battalion served under Cadwalader and who was captured at Fort Washington, says in his "Memoirs": "There were no barracks, or casemates, or fuel, or water within the body of the place. It was an open earthen construction, with ground at a short distance on the back of it equally high, if not higher; without a ditch of any consequence, if there was a ditch at all; no outworks but an incipient one on the north not deserving the appellation, or any of those exterior multiplied obstacles and defenses that, so far as I can judge, could entitle it to the name of fortress in any degree capable of sustaining a siege. It required no parallels to approach it; the citadel was at once within reach of assailants. In addition to this, there were no magazines of any kind prepared, and it is stated in the Annual Register, which carried on the history of the war, that, with its other deficiencies, there was not found in it ammunition adequate for the shortest defense."

It is perhaps needless to add that Major Graydon was opposed to the policy of attempting to retain Fort Washington.

Marshall's "Life of Washington" says: "Fort Washington is on a very high piece of rocky ground near the North river, very difficult of ascent, especially towards the north or Kingsbridge. The Fort was capable of containing about 1,000 men, but the lines and outworks, which were chiefly on the southern side toward New York, were drawn quite across the Island. The ground was naturally very strong, the approaches difficult, and the fortifications, although not sufficient to resist heavy artillery, were believed to be in a condition which would prevent any attempt to carry them by storm. Had the Fort toward the

East river been defended with as much gallantry as the hill on the north, the enemy would probably have been repulsed."

General Howe, considering the relation of the Fort to Fort Lee on the Jersey shore, and noting that it commanded the North river while it barred communication with New York by land, regarded the post so important that in his opinion its possession was absolutely necessary.

The builders of Fort Washington were the Pennsylvania troops who arrived in New York during June, 1776. About the middle of that month Washington, on horseback, reconnoitred the heights adjacent to King's Bridge, and determined where works were to be laid out. Irving's "Life of Washington" says: "Breastworks were to be thrown up for the defense of the bridge, and an advanced work (subsequently called Fort Independence) was to be built beyond it on a hill commanding Spuyten Duyvil creek. . . . A strong work, intended as a kind of citadel, was to crown a rocky height between two and three miles south of the bridge commanding the channel of the Hudson; and below it were to be redoubts on the bank of the river at Jeffrey's Point. In honor of the General, the citadel received the name of Fort Washington." The work of construction was carried on under the immediate and technical direction of Colonel Rufus Putnam, Chief Engineer of the Army. The armament of the Fort is variously stated, possibly because different authors refer to different periods of the Fort's history or include more or less outworks. General Wilson's "Memorial History of New York" gives the Fort 18 guns; Lossing credits it with "about 20 heavy cannons . . . besides several smaller pieces and mortars;" while a letter dated Fort Washington, August 3, 1776, says: The "Fort mounts thirty-two pieces of heavy cannon." (Irving's "Life of Washington.") The calibre of the ordnance may be judged from the description of the pieces captured at the Fort and its outworks November 16th, which included 4 thirty-two-pounders, 2 eighteen-pounders, 7 twelve-pounders, 5 nine-pounders, 15 six-pounders, 8 three-pounders, 2 five and a half inch howitzers, besides the cannon taken at King's Bridge. (American Archives. 5th Series. Vol. III.)

The abattis of Fort Washington enclosed a space of three or four acres, while its ravelins protected an area of three times that extent. After its capture it was named Fort Mifflin by the British, but upon the repossession of the Island by the Americans seven years later, unlike Fort Tryon and Fort George, its American title was resumed.

Fort Washington was the citadel of an extensive series of fortifications lying north of the battlefield of Harlem Heights, some of which were merely redoubts or breastworks, and others sufficiently important to be dignified with the name of Forts. In order that their relation to

Fort Washington and the battle hereafter to be described may be understood, they may briefly be mentioned, beginning on the south:

During the interval between the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, and the Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776, Washington fixed upon the heights north of the Hollow Way (Manhattan street) as the best position to take, and three lines of defenses were projected across the Island.

The first and most southerly extended across the high ground between 145th and 147th streets. It included three small redoubts upon as many eminences and was protected by abattis. The western redoubt has been located in the accompanying map at the intersection of 145th street and Eleventh avenue by means of a topographical map made some thirty years ago, which indicates the remains of a redoubt at that spot, although there is higher ground at 147th street. The construction of this line was undertaken on September 16, 1776, during the Battle of Harlem. Colonel Silliman, writing on September 17th, of the previous day, says: "Our brigades, which form a line across the Island where I am, were immediately ordered under arms, but as the enemy did not immediately advance, we grounded our arms and took spades and shovels and went to work, and before night had thrown up lines across the Island. There was nothing before but three little redoubts in about a mile, and we are at work this day in strengthening them."

The second line of intrenchments zig-zagged across the Island between the lines of the present 153d and 155th streets, now largely occupied by Trinity Cemetery. It contained four redoubts and was also protected by abattis. It was stronger than the first line.

The foregoing are the "double lines of intrenchments" alluded to by historians.

The third, without redoubts, was projected approximately along the line of the present 161st street, from Washington's Headquarters (the Jumel or Morris Mansion, now owned by General Ferdinand P. Earle) to the Hudson river, but was never completed.

Along the central hills, where the Convent of the Sacred Heart now stands was a line of small unconnected batteries, overlooking the Harlem.

On the promontory of Jeffrey's Hook (Fort Washington Point, so-called) was a redoubt intended to cover the obstruction placed across the river at that point. Its remains are still noticeable, and are sometimes erroneously called the remains of Fort Washington.

The sunken obstruction in the river is described in a letter dated Fort Washington, August 3, 1776, as follows: "Four ships, chained and boomed, with a number of amazing large chevaux de frise, were sunk close by the Fort under the command of General Mifflin." This

device was a contrivance of General Putnam, but after its inefficiency was proved, the General does not appear to have been very eager to claim credit for it, and, in the confusion of names, it is not unfrequently attributed to Colonel Putnam, Chief Engineer of the Army.

Passing six-tenths of a mile beyond Fort Washington, along Fort Washington avenue, to a point where the backbone of the ridge breaks away suddenly (between what would be 195th and 198th streets), one comes to Fort Tryon. At the time of the capture of Fort Washington, this point of vantage was credited with a single two-gun redoubt. After its capture it was strengthened and given the British name which it retains. Three conspicuous redoubts now mark the spot. They are immediately north of the house of W. C. Muschenheim.

Still further north, overlooking the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil creek, was a little two-gun redoubt dignified with the name of Cock Hill Fort.

Upon an eminence called Marble Hill at the very northern extremity of Manhattan Island, around three sides of which sweeps Spuyten Duyvil creek, stood Fort Prince Charles, commanding King's Bridge on the north and Dyckman's Bridge on the east. The site is a few feet north of the residence of DeWitt Clinton Overbaugh. On July 4, 1894, a flag pole was erected on the spot, and Mr. Overbaugh delivered an address reciting the romantic and dramatic history of the Fort. The North Side Board of Trade has for two years been endeavoring to secure the conversion of the site into a park. Bayonets, bullets, cannon balls, human bones, a curious seal, and numerous other relics have been exhumed there. That it was also a place of prehistoric importance is attested by the stone implements and extraordinary shell deposits (remains of aboriginal feasts) found there.

On the eastern side of the Island, about opposite Fort Tryon, on the bluff overlooking the Harlem between the termini of the present Tenth and Eleventh avenues, then called Laurel Hill, was a strong fortified position subsequently named Fort George by the British. The earthworks were extant in 1890, but were subsequently razed to make way for a proprietary pleasure resort called Fort George Park. In 1896, the Hon. Andrew H. Green secured the passage by the Legislature of a bill for the conversion of this spot into a public park, but the bill failed to become a law for lack of the Governor's signature.

Down below Laurel Hill, to the northward, was a four-gun redoubt commanding the King's Bridge road.

South of Laurel Hill, on the western bank of the Harlem, were a number of minor defenses.

Leaving out of consideration for the moment certain works on the mainland hereafter to be mentioned, a glance may be taken at the extent of the field which the Americans had to defend.

A circuit of that portion of the Island bounded by the first line of intrenchments at 145th street, the Harlem river, Spuyten Duyvil creek, and the Hudson river, measures about ten miles. Major Graydon, in his "Memoirs," says: "I find it stated by the King of Prussia, in his History of the Seven Years' War, that 16,000 men were inadequate to the defense of Berlin, three miles in circumference, say nine or ten of our miles."\* The courage of the Americans in attempting to retain an equal territory with only 3,000 is thus apparent.

Passing now over to the mainland, to the north and east of Manhattan Island, we find a series of fortifications, one of which, Fort Number Eight, took an important part in the capture of Fort Washington on November 16th, others being more or less prominent in subsequent history.

On the north slope of Spuyten Duyvil creek, on what is said to be the site of the old Indian fortress Nipinicksen, were three redoubts called, respectively, Forts Number One, Number Two, and Number Three.

Fort Number One was a square stone redoubt, overlooking the Hudson and the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil creek. It forms the foundation of the house owned by Lewis H. Lapham and occupied by his cousin, A. Schlaet, just west of the junction of Sidney street with Independence avenue. Numerous Indian and Revolutionary relics have been dug up on the spot. Four-pound and six-pound solid shot preserved in the house indicate the calibre of the ordnance used thereabouts.

Fort Number Two was a circular redoubt, called by the Americans Fort Swartwout. It stood on the crown of the hill about midway between Forts Number One and Three, in a field owned by Isaac Johnson, northwest of the intersection of Sidney and Troy streets. (The names of these streets do not appear on the City Directory maps.) No traces of the fort remain.

Fort Number Three was a stone redoubt on the eastern brow of Spuyten Duyvil Hill, a few rods southeast of the house of Mrs. Warren B. Sage. The site is just north of Sidney and east of Troy streets. Thirty years ago Mr. Sage removed about 200 loads of stone, the remains of the fort, because they interfered with the growth of the grass on the place. Cannon balls and fragments of exploded shells are preserved in Mrs. Sage's house.

Forts Numbers One, Two and Three, originally thrown up with haste by the Americans in August, 1776, were abandoned by them and seized and strengthened by the British before the capture of Fort Wash-

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\* Graydon went on to say: "Now the circuit to be defended by Magaw was scarcely less (if I have not much forgotten its dimensions) than four or five miles," and on that erroneous basis estimated that at least 10,000 men were needed for the defense of the post.

ington. In November, 1778, they had a garrison of 110 officers and men. They were abandoned by the British in the fall of 1779.\*

The fourth in the series was called Fort Independence. Like Fort Washington, it was built by Pennsylvania troops, assisted by militia, under the direction of Colonel Putnam. It was a bastioned earthwork, with ravelins to the east and southeast. Apprehensive of the movements of the British, and acting under the orders of his superiors, Colonel Lasher destroyed his barracks and abandoned the fort October 27, 1776, to reinforce Colonel Magaw at Fort Washington. So hastily was the order carried out that the cannon and 300 stand of small arms were abandoned. On the following day the enemy appeared and took possession, and held it against all comers for nearly three years. Then, on August 16, 1779, they removed the guns, on August 17 demolished the magazine, and on September 12 abandoned it altogether. Its site is on the west side of Giles avenue, two-tenths of a mile north of its intersection with Sedgwick avenue, and is occupied by a house owned by W. O. Giles and now used for a boarding house. Some of the earthworks can distinctly be traced. Two iron cannon, seven feet long and with four-inch bore, which were dug up on the place and for many years stood there, now rest upon the lawn in front of the Van Cortlandt mansion in Van Cortlandt Park. The memory of the Fort is preserved in the names of the adjacent "Fort Independence Street" and "Cannon Place."

Proceeding down Giles and Sedgwick avenues .55 of a mile, from Fort Independence, one comes to the house of Edward E. Eames, built well back from the road on the eastern side. Directly back of this house, 300 feet, is the site of Fort Number Five, now within the city's purchase for the Jerome Park Reservoir. This fort was about 70 feet square. It was occupied by the British in 1777, and dismantled September 18, 1779.

Fort Number Six, or the King's Redoubt, was situated .45 of a mile south of Fort Number Five, on the same side of the avenue. The site is very distinctly marked by a conspicuous mound 380 feet northeast of the house of Mrs. N. P. Bailey.

\* On a British map engraved by act of parliament, October 10th, 1776, Tippet's or Spuyten Duyvil Hill on which these three forts stood is erroneously called "Tetard's Hill," and this mistake has been the seed of an extensive crop of errors in subsequent maps reproduced or drawn for modern histories. On a military map in Lossing's "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution," in addition to the perpetuation of this mistake, Fort Independence is also located on the hill. As a consequence, the belief is locally entertained by many that one of these three forts is Fort Independence, and a neighboring street bears the misnomer of "Independence Street." The fact is, that Fort Number Four on the accompanying map is Fort Independence and marks the site of Tetard's Hill, Dominic Tetard's farm having been northeast of King's Bridge. The "Fort Independence Street" in that neighborhood is properly entitled to the name.

Fort Number Seven was .6 of a mile farther south, on the same side of Sedgwick avenue, just south of the intersection of the Fordham Landing road, on the property of Oswald Cammann. In the absence of any trace of the redoubt, its location cannot be stated with exactness.

Forty-five hundredths of a mile still farther south, on the same side of the avenue, between the University buildings and Burnside avenue, is the site of Fort Number Eight, the remains of which were visible when the residence of Mrs. Gustav Schwab was built in 1857. Cannon balls, grape shot, English coins, uniform buttons, bridle ornaments, pike tips, broken camp kettles, and other martial relics dug up on the place are preserved in the house. The redoubt was a few feet north of the house, at a spot marked by a boulder which is inscribed: "The Site of Fort Number Eight, 1776-1783." When the boulder was dedicated in 1896, Mrs. Schwab's son, Prof. John Christopher Schwab, of Yale University, delivered a very scholarly and critical address on the subject of Fort Number Eight and its relation to the Revolutionary War. The fort was hastily erected by the British in preparation for the siege of Fort Washington, and it was upon the completion of this work that Gen. Howe felt himself in a position to forward the demand which he had made upon Colonel Magaw, November 15, 1776, to surrender. During the next six years it figured conspicuously in the military history of New York and Westchester County. The redoubt was supplied with heavy artillery and field pieces (presumably brought up from New York) capable of storming the works on Laurel Hill, across the Harlem. Graydon thus refers to the fort in his "Memoirs": "On the west side of the Harlem river (Laurel Hill) a body of men was posted to watch the motions of the enemy who had erected works on the high commanding ground east of that river, apparently with the design of covering the landing of the troops in that part of the Island of New York." General Heath, referring to its subsequent use, says in his "Memoirs": "The enemy had a redoubt on the east side of Harlem creek, nearly opposite to the fort on Laurel Hill, and under the fire of its cannon, for the security of their advanced troops on the Morrisania side. The ultimate fate of the work is recorded on another page of Heath's "Memoirs": "On the 20th of October, 1782, the enemy were demolishing their works at Number Eight, Morrisania." \*

With this outline of Fort Washington and its related fortifications, we now proceed to a relation of the operations of November 16, 1776:

\*Passing northward along Sedgwick Avenue with Washington Bridge for a starting point, a cyclometer will register the following distances: Washington Bridge, 0; opposite Fort Number Eight, 1 mile; opposite Fort Number Seven, 1.45; opposite Fort Number Six, 2.05; intersection of King's Bridge Road, 2.3; opposite Fort Number Five, 2.5; intersection of Giles Avenue, 2.85; opposite Fort Independence, 3.05.

## PART IV.

THE DEFENCE AND REDUCTION OF MOUNT  
WASHINGTON, MANHATTAN ISLAND.

BY REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON.

## I.

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS AT THE TIME OF THE  
REVOLUTION.

THE northern extremity of the Island of Manhattan consists of a precipitous elevation, rising abruptly in every direction from water to water, extending some four miles from 127th street to Spuyten Duyvil creek, and averaging about two-thirds of a mile in width.

The mass of granitic gneiss of which it consists, formed, in some condition of the glacial period, a barrier to the flood emerging from the icy mass, and the waters sawed their way between Inwood Hill and Riverdale, and swirling around in the pool which afterward formed the marshes of the Inwood valley, found a second vent by the course of the Harlem, leaving the scored and worn hump of rock dividing two rivers, bounded on the east by the heights of Fordham, and on the west by the precipices of the Palisades. As the ice receded the surface was sprinkled with the loose, water-worn boulders brought down from the highlands of Dutchess county and Connecticut, and the whole became covered with a thin skin of alluvial soil.

The advance of vegetation brought the forests growth, which for countless years grew and wasted. The birches throve in the crevices of the steep crags, and the locality became to the natives, a portion of the Weckquaskeek, "the birch-bark country," extending along the river from Yonkers down to the anchorage ground where Hudson brought to his ship, below the sheltering promontory of Jeffrey's Hook, and gazing on the swelling heights as the northwest breeze ruffled the tree tops against the background of clear blue sky, declared it to be the fairest land on which the foot of man had ever trod.

The settlers of the New Netherland, following hard after the pioneer, drove their Dutch bargain for the Island with a few Indian representatives, perhaps from their village on the Riverdale hillside, in all



probability ignoring the real inhabitants who dwelt on the only part of the Island of value from an Indian point of view, the tree-crowned heights which formed shelter, fishing and hunting ground.

That the natives had little understanding that they were parting with these their natural rights appears clear from their resentment when later troubles arose on these subjects, and their late maintenance of a claim to the extreme summit of the Island.

The wild wooded heights presented but little attraction to the prosaic farmers of the Harlem flatlands, and for many a long decade the Indians were left to such possession as they desired, one of their encampments being on the south side of Inwood Hill, near the foot of Bolton road, and another probably on Jeffrey's Hook, with a small space under cultivation above that locality, near the highest elevation, on which a field of maize extended south of 181st street, between the present King's Bridge road and the Hudson bluff, in a marshy depression, the source of the little brook which still finds an outlet down the valley northward to the Harlem river at Sherman's creek.

The burghers of New Haarlem regarded the wild woods as of so equivocal a tenure, and so doubtful a value, that at most they were treated and used as common lands, in which any or all should help themselves at their own risk, to products of the forest, alive or inanimate.

In time, their hogs ran wild below the trees, and when palisades were required, the inhabitants turned out in a body and cut what they required on the common account. The growth of settlers' families at last led to a desire to adapt the wild lands to civilization, and Magistrate Van Oblinus obtained consent of his fellow townsmen to occupation of a part, and seeking the relics of the aboriginal owners, purchased for his hardy son Hendrik, the first settler, the equivocal right to squat without molestation on their half-cultivated oasis.

Such a privilege for one was naturally soon succeeded by demands for like advantages on the part of others, and by 1712 it had become desirable, in the view of the British Governor, to allot the common lands, in strips which extended from river to river, among the freeholders of the Dutch village.

The Van Oblinus family, by luck or favor, drew lands contiguous to that already occupied by their relative, and the family were thus established in possession of the loftiest section of the heights, extending from about the line of 165th street to 181st street, at the head of the valley descending to Inwood, and containing the most desirable cultivable ground on the elevated portion. This elevated portion extends northward along the Hudson bank for about three-fourths of a mile, and was then and for fifty years later known simply as the Long Hill.

As time passed on, the facilities of the use of the post-road which had been blazed through the woods on the line of least resistance, brought other settlers, and from Breakneck Hill, where the road rose steeply from the plains, to the bridge across the creek, which took toll under the King's patent, a scattered line of farmhouses existed at that period of unrest when the principles for which the Revolution was begun, were in agitation in every home.

In his trips along the post-road to visit his friends, the Philipse family, at Yonkers, the beauties of the position had attracted the attention of a well-to-do gentleman and officer, Roger Morris, who had erected in 1756 a handsome dwelling on the east side of the road at 161st street, which was later to figure for many an eventful month as the centre and shelter of military authority, beneath whose roof affairs of international importance were destined to be transacted, and which fortunately has escaped the perils of war, of changes of ownership and of modern improvements and remains an interesting relic of the history of this part of the great metropolis.

Hard by was a white house, part farmhouse, part place of refreshment, which stood on the opposite side of the post-road, which afterward figured in events of interest, and at about 153rd street another small farmhouse sheltered other humble neighbors, and survived the vicissitudes of time till a comparatively recent period.

Just west of the present line of Amsterdam avenue at 147th street stood the residence of another British officer, Colonel John Maunsell; which, previous to the period of the Revolution, had passed into the possession of an inhabitant of the West Indies, by name Charles Aitken of St. Croix. Where the steep hill reached the summit parallel with this residence was another smaller dwelling near the road. Between the inn then kept by the Widow Day at the southern extremity of the Heights, on 127th street near Eighth avenue, and Cox's tavern at Kingsbridge, only one other inn existed, on the east side of the road exactly on the line of 181st street, in front of which, at the head of the long steep rise from Inwood long known as the Kingsbridge road, and now as Broadway, swung the sign of the Blue Bell, in and around which events of intense interest were later to take place.

The Oblinus family was still represented on part of its original holdings by John and Mary Oblinus, to whose son Hendrick the parents had recently assigned the major part of their farm, and had also sold a hundred acres, with a dwelling house, probably the inn, to Blazius Moore, a merchant in tobacco, then resident at John street and Broadway, whose sister Rosannah had married John Bernard Bowers, a student of divinity from Germany, who had settled in the district and lived hard by

the inn. Further north the families of Dyckman, Vermilye, Nagle and Post farmed the lowlands of the Inwood valley, the farmhouse of the latter being situated close to the west bank of the Harlem river on the line of 210th street, and known until its destruction by fire in 1901 as the Century house. Such were the social conditions of Washington Heights when the principles which were shortly to lead to the Revolution were anxiously discussed at every fireside.

## II.

## THE PREPARATION FOR THE STORM.

It was in the very early days of the year 1776, a year destined to become one of so much of exciting incident to the City of New York, that General Washington, whose anxious forethought had predicted the plans of the British authorities for the seizure of the town as the base of their future operations, took the first definite steps toward placing the threatened locality in some state of anticipatory defense.

On the 10th of January he wrote to Colonel, the Earl of Stirling, then in command of such American forces as were in the neighborhood of New York, informing him that Major-General Charles Lee had been despatched from Boston, "with orders to repair to New York with such volunteers as he can raise on his way to put the city and the fortifications up the river in the best posture of defense the season and situation of affairs will admit of."

The city was under the nominal control of Governor Tryon, whose undermined authority was only backed by the presence in the bay of His Majesty's ships of war, the "Asia" and the "Phoenix," to the former of which he retired in the second week of February.

It appears that the general scheme of the defenses of Manhattan, or York Island as it was then commonly called, was due to the versatile, but somewhat unreliable, Lee, whose scheme was in due course submitted to the Commander-in-Chief, and received his approval, as he wrote to Stirling on March 14: "The plan of defenses formed by General Lee is, from what little I know of the place, a very judicious one." Stirling was specially occupied in prosecuting the work, "fortifying," he says, "every advantageous spot" near New York, "laboring at the completion of the works." The original location of the forts afterward known by the names of Forts Washington and Constitution, on opposite sides of the narrowed channel at Jeffrey's Hook, were certainly due to these two officers, and the titles by which they were thereafter to be known may have been Lee's conception.

On the 29th of March the Commander-in-Chief detailed General Israel Putnam to assume the command at New York, and having become by that time assured of the intentions of the British to make this locality the scene of their next attempts, he directed him specially to "proceed in continuing to execute the plan proposed by Major-General Lee for fortifying that city and securing the passes of the East and North rivers." His own arrival with the forces under his command followed on April 14.

Among those earnest men on whom in that time of anxiety Washington leaned was Colonel Henry Knox, acting as chief of artillery, a branch in which the needs were more sorely felt than in others, and him the Commander called to the city in order to lay on him the duty of providing the guns, without which the fortifications were of little use.

On April 30 he arrived and proceeded to organize the companies of artillerymen, artificers, sappers and smiths, engineers and wheelwrights, which could be sorted out of the heterogeneous collection of civilians who had come together to the support of the cause of liberty.

On June 10 he reported that he could command 121 cannon of all kinds, light and heavy, old and new, in and around New York, for the handling of which his total force amounted to 520 men and officers, a work for which effectively to be done 1,200 men were none too many.

Colonel Knox was a particular friend of General Nathaniel Greene, who at the end of May took up with him and other leading officers the question of the extension of the system of fortifications in the upper part of the Island of Manhattan.

"I am obliged to defer going up to King's Bridge till another day," the General wrote to Knox on the 29th of May. "I will endeavor to see you this afternoon, and fix upon some other time for reconnoitering the ground up and about King's Bridge."

Knox was occupied at this time, as engineer, in selecting sites; and Greene, Heath and Putnam in advising and determining on their use.

On the 7th of June Greene returned from his duties in Brooklyn and entered into this matter with them. During their expeditions they examined not only the Long Hill, on which a work had already been begun, but the entire heights, then commonly classified as the "Heights of Harlem," and by one or other, "the commanding height near Morris' house" was pointed out "as a position which, if properly fortified, would be nearly impregnable."

We may imagine the group examining, from Macomb's place in the valley below, the precipitous bluffs, out of the woody steep of which the portico of Colonel Morris' residence peeped from among the surrounding trees, or riding along the post-road and thence examining the deep declivities of Audubon Park and extending their rides through the woods to the crowning summit beyond the Oblinus farm.

We can feel confident that the party must have taken rest and refreshment at the inns along the heights, resting perhaps at Morris' house at 161st street, where the merits of proposed positions for the intrenchments afterward constructed across the narrow line of bluffs were perhaps discussed; and undoubtedly at the Blue Bell, at 181st

street, where the lines of the fort, then partly constructed, and the extension of its outer works were talked over and developed.

There was evidently some divergence of opinion, the more cautious Greene and Heath insisting that even if the whole system were made "as strong as Gibraltar" it would be but "a mere trap from which it would be impossible for the army to extricate itself, unless the high grounds above the bridge (that is, around Fordham and Riverdale) "were occupied at the same time." Alas, that this sound judgment was not remembered by one of them after those same high grounds were in the actual possession of an enemy. For the time being this opinion prevailed, and it was decided not only to complete the extensive defenses of the fort on the Long Hill, but to lay out a chain of forts outside the island's limits, on the high points beyond the Harlem river, extending from Riverdale to Fordham, and across the Hudson on the line of narrowest width to complete the companion fortress which with the Manhattan works should control the passage of the noble estuary.

It is evident that the rugged features of the locality captivated the imagination of all as a secure future fortress which should in due course defy the efforts of the enemy on land and water. About the middle of June Washington, in person, surveyed the locality on horseback, when he gave definite directions as to the disposition of defenses around the central position.

Its distinct importance as the key of the lower Hudson no doubt operated in deciding its title, for it was about this time that the Long Hill, as well as its fort, became known by the familiar name of the beloved commander, and in all future references was known as Mount Washington, an appropriate title, which it is not too much to hope may in time be restored to it.

For the carrying out of the executive work Colonel Rufus Putnam was detailed as chief engineer, charged, he tells us, "with laying out and overseeing the works" at Fort Washington, "a service of much fatigue, for my whole time was taken up from daylight in the morning until night in the business, besides sometimes going in the night by water from New York to Fort Washington."

In the early summer days the arrival of a British fleet was imminent, and on July 12 the advance guard of the vast hostile armada of war ships and transports lay at anchor in the lower bay.

Washington's expectation that the British would make the Hudson river their ultimate point of attack was immediately demonstrated, as that very day the frigates "Phoenix" and "Rose," followed by the schooner "Tryal" and two other small craft, boldly rushed their way past the batteries of the city and of the Heights. These vessels, favored by wind and tide, moved so rapidly through range of the guns on the

Heights that though every muzzle was brought to bear on them they received little damage, and their decks being piled high with sandbags protected their men against the rifle fire from the woods and the sharpshooters at the Hook. They succeeded in making their way to the Tappan Zee, where they commenced a series of soundings for the guidance of future operations, and by their communication with the disaffected and with the Tory sympathizers in Westchester and Dutchess counties, formed a menace to the security of the entire American system of defense. Their success caused anxious enquiry as to the probability of obstructing their return passage, and of the advance of any others that might make attempts to join them. General Putnam, with his friend, Brigadier-General Mifflin, undertook preliminary steps in that direction. The comparatively narrow portion of the river at Jeffrey's Point afforded the only practicable opportunity, and they began a survey of the river's depth at that point.

They had finished this work by July 21 when, as William Duer wrote, they had found "the depth in no part exceeds seven fathoms; the width, however, of the channel (which is from three to seven fathoms) is not much less than 1800 yards, the shallow part of the river running in an oblique direction," as it still does, west by south from the Point to the Jersey shore.

The project was necessarily an extensive one. It was to be no less than an attempt to block the fairway by sinking vessels, chained together, at certain spots selected with the intention of forcing any vessel which should avoid them near the guns of the elevated fortifications. As the depth of the channel was so great the hulks were to be provided with long masts or spars, standing high above their decks, which should protrude above water level.

Even so immense an operation did not daunt the spirits of the patriots, and preparations were promptly made, vessels condemned and appraised, materials and men gathered, and an expert brought from Philadelphia. The work was carried on mainly at the Hook, under the charge of Colonel Robert Magaw, commandant of the Fort, and was conducted by Captain Mathew Cook, and generally supervised by Washington's own aide-de-camp, Tench Tilghman.

Standing on either side at this part of the river the magnitude of the work those anxious yet determined men contemplated strikes the observer in a manner more illustrative than the observation of any other of the operations of the men of '76. It was Israel Putnam to whose fertile mind was due the scheme, the execution of which was undertaken by the men under the command of Brigadier-General Mifflin. The latter was just the man for the purpose. An educated man of cultivated and animated manners, he was full of activity and fire; though described as

being "rather too much of a bustler, harassing his men unnecessarily," with a great talent for haranguing. He commanded the best Continental troops from Pennsylvania, including the battalions of Shee, St. Clair, Wayne, and Magaw, of which the first was composed largely of aristocratic Philadelphians, and the last was the Fifth Regiment, composed of the hardy frontiersmen of the Cumberland Valley, men to whom the labors of the field and the wood presented no novelty.

These troops were then encamped around King's Bridge, a term which may be taken then to include in a general way the northern portion of the Heights, and for many a week of that summer they were engaged in hauling stone to load the condemned hulks at the Hook, while others made the woods ring with their axes and with their songs as they plied shovel, mattock and crowbar in the erection of those substantial mounds whose features the wear and tear of a hundred and twenty-five seasons have been unable entirely to efface. It is sad to think of the high hopes with which they toiled at the construction of what was to become to many of them a trap to land them in the sufferings of prison martyrdom, malignant disease and early death.

The work of obtaining, preparing, chaining and sinking vessels went on till on August 3 the first set of three were sunk, and with their spars protruding above tide level must have presented a formidable appearance to a navigator.

Meantime the frigates had not been left in peaceable possession, and preparations were made to attack them by fire vessels. While these were being constructed a most determined and desperate attack was made upon these powerful vessels by the American semi-marine force of East Coast longshoremen, in open rowboats and in broad daylight. The attack was repulsed with loss, but its bravery excited the admiration of all beholders.

Fourteen days later, on the night of August 16, two small craft filled with inflammable materials were floated out from Spuyten Duyvil creek, and at dead of night were fired when alongside the British squadron. One was secured to a bomb-ketch, being one of the tenders of the frigates, and burned her to the water's edge, while the other fell foul of the "Phoenix" which barely escaped annihilation by cutting her cables and rigging. The hardihood of the small forlorn hope crews did not enable them all to escape, as five or six were drowned, but the British loss was severe, some seventy lives having been lost.

The frigates took advantage of the first favorable wind to return to the lower bay, the position of the newly sunk obstructions being revealed to them by a deserter, enabling them to get by comparatively uninjured, though exposed to a furious fire from the forts. There followed the disasters of Brooklyn and of Kips Bay, and the concentration of the



American forces upon the Heights where, in Roger Morris' residence, the Commander-in-Chief established himself on September 15. Work on the obstructions was pushed all August and September, its necessity becoming more apparent on the American retreat from the lower part of the island, and in October several more vessels were almost ready to be added to those at the bottom of the river, when another incursion took place, timed evidently by news of the imminence of the completion of the work, and led by the same hardy commander, Hyde Parker, in the "Phœnix," accompanied by the frigates "Roebuck" and "Tartar" and three ketches, sailed boldly between the forts, receiving their fire and that of the newly-made battery on the Hook. Losing six men and three officers, and eighteen wounded, they nevertheless steered clear of the spars and ran up to Dobbs Ferry, forming the advance guard of the grand combined movement designed by Sir William Howe.

## III.

## THE DEFENSES OF THE MOUNT.

At the time of the evacuation of the City of New York by the American army, the heights of Harlem were most naturally and properly selected as its place of retreat and further resistance to the enemy. The wooded sides of the hills rising on the south abruptly from the valley of the Hollow Way, now designated very unnecessarily as Manhattan street, flanked on the west by the broad Hudson and on the east by the still more precipitous point known as the Point of Rocks, dominating the plain of Harlem and the post-road below, afforded an excellent vantage ground, with a secure cover for supports in the elevated ground extending northward between the Hudson and Harlem to and beyond the fortifications which had for months past menaced the passage of the river and which now became the central point around which other forms of defensive works were hastily commenced, suited to the presence of a large defensive force.

The immediate presence of the foe at the south necessitated work first in that direction and ere the appearance of the redcoats of the enemy in the abandoned line of earthworks across McGowan's pass, now in Central Park, the men under Greene's command had thrown up some intrenchments along the brow of the hill overlooking the marshy end of the Hollow Way, known then as the Salt Meadow or Vly of Matje David, and on the Point of Rocks a little redoubt, and probably other slender breastworks at vulnerable points along what is some day to become Colonial Park. During the fighting on the Claremont hill of September 16, the men held in reserve were vehemently laboring on a line of defensive earthwork which was to be used to bar any retaliatory advance by the enemy in heavy force. This line was placed a little distance back along the hilltop, at what is now 147th street, its location being chosen by reason of the line of the post-road reaching the summit at this point by the steep and rough ascent, known then and long since by the appropriate title of Breakneck Hill. This earthwork passed just south of Spencer's headquarters in the Maunsell house, and was planned in an irregular zigzag, taking advantage of the contour of the rocky ground, and being at a later period developed into a more complete military form, with an abattis of felled brushwood along the open ground in front, and two redoubts, one at the post-road, the other at a point where the "Boulevard," or Broadway, now intersects the height, and of which the last faint remaining trace still exists on a vacant plot at the intersection of 147th street with that thoroughfare.

During the end of September and early October a second line was constructed between 153rd and 155th streets, the line of which may be traced by the contour of the irregular eminences now enclosed as Trinity Churchyard, within which the exhumation of many military relics has borne witness to this use of the ground. At the southern extremity of the cemetery on Broadway, a tablet marking this use of the rising rocks above, has been very appropriately placed by the Sons of the Revolution. East of Amsterdam avenue the earthworks extended evidently on the south side of 155th street through the property of the Hon. John Whalen, cutting the post-road, now St. Nicholas avenue, and proceeding to the edge of the hillside overlooking the Harlem, apparently ending in some sort of a redoubt about where the Speedway has been formed to enter St. Nicholas place.

A third line was commenced, but was not completed, commencing at the Morris house on the line of 162d street, again obstructing the post-road at this point, and extending westward over the rocks along 161st street across the present Broadway just below 161st street, crossing the line of Fort Washington avenue, which was then a little valley or depression, and skirting around the abrupt hill which formed part of the Lewis property in later days, and which still, shorn but recently of its pristine verdure, dominates the entrance of the Boulevard Lafayette.

Beyond these three lines, known respectively as the first, second and third, no other intrenchments had been made until Fort Washington was reached, but the latter was now surrounded by an outer line of breastworks extending around the slope which formed its glacis, over which the fire of its cannon could sweep downward. These lines, irregularly taking advantage of the rocky ground, commenced at the head of the valley looking toward Inwood a little north of 181st street, and west of Broadway, where rocks form a natural rampart, a point still known locally as the Death Gap, ere long, it is to be feared, to be swept under the line of a modern avenue. Around the fields and across the line of Fort Washington avenue the line followed by the breastworks may still be faintly traced, and west along the Hudson front of the Mount through the property of Mr. James Gordon Bennett, circling round to the north on lines now entirely obliterated, to the point where the precipitous sides of the hill fall down to the valley below, where the post-road descended sharply toward the King's Bridge.

The central fortification, which the above described breastworks enclosed, has been very exactly located by the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, and cannot better be described than in the words of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, in presenting a memorial to the authorities of the City of New

York bespeaking their attention to the fast disappearing remains of this important fortification.

"An observer stationed at the intersection of Eleventh avenue and 183rd street, with a compass corrected for magnetic deviation, will find that the avenue runs about 29 degrees east of north, and the street 61 degrees west of north, an angle of 90 degrees. If he will proceed to the point where the western curb-line of Fort Washington avenue would be intersected by the line of the southern sidewalk of 183rd street if projected, and walk thence 356 feet in the direction of the continuance of the line, he will stand on what remains of the NW bastion of the fort. This bastion is rapidly wearing away under the action of the weather. Looking a few degrees west of south from the NW bastion, we may see, 162 feet distant, the extremity of the SW bastion, wholly covered with verdure and in a much better state of preservation. Plotting the fort according to the plans obtainable it is found that James Gordon Bennett's house lies close to the N bastion, that an unoccupied house (the Morewood residence, removed in 1891) stands upon the site of the SE bastion, and that the old Four-in-Hand Club House, built some thirty years ago (since destroyed by a windstorm and afterward burned) stands between the NW and SW bastions where additional room has been made for it by blasting."

It may be added that an outer redoubt was probably planned just at the north of the fort, encircling the present Bennett house, and that the interior of the fort seems to have been destitute of any casemate or cover for the magazine or for the defenders, while the nature of the ground precluded the construction of any outer ditch or trench as such a fortress would naturally have required for its entire completeness in a defensive sense. The nature of the ground, on which little soil is to be found, makes clear the difficulties under which its construction was effected, and the fact that the Hessians and British occupants during seven years' possession, made practically no changes in its character, evidences the ability with which its constructors made use of all possible material. Its armaments at different periods varied considerably. At first it probably had only a few small guns, but as larger ones became available pieces up to 18 pounds carrying capacity were added, until at the time of its loss to the Americans its captors reported it to contain four guns of 32 pounds, two of 18 pounds, seven of 12 pounds, four of 9 pounds, fifteen of 6 pounds, eight of three pounds, and two 5½ inch howitzers.

These, however, probably included the guns in the outer lines and works, which were, however, of the small sizes above mentioned, leaving, therefore, probably, all the heavier pieces as the armament of the fort.

Fort Washington must, in a military sense, be regarded as in itself the citadel or central keep of a fortress which included the entire heights and of which the three lines previously described, though distant a mile away, formed a part.

On the point or hook about 1,500 feet away and some 200 feet below, was the redoubt, elsewhere described, constructed in October to bring guns to bear at closer range on vessels avoiding the sunken obstructions, and on the rock forming the extremity of the hook, a little work for a single gun, known as a "lunette," was at some period erected.

On the north the Long Hill extends about three-quarters of a mile, its ridge being now followed by Fort Washington avenue to a point where it descends abruptly toward Inwood. The crest, known somewhat later as Forest Hill, and by its British captors designated Fort Tryon, was the site of an earthwork and outer breastworks the form of some of which may at present be easily perceived. This redoubt was armed with only a couple of small guns, and was intended as the northerly part of the central fortification, the nature of the rocky and wooded fastness being depended upon mainly as its support. The earthworks began in ground now owned by Mr. C. K. G. Billings, on which his residence is to be constructed, in a little angular redoubt overlooking the Hudson and commanding a magnificent prospect up and down the river. Thence southeasterly a breastwork of rocks was made to the edge of the hill overlooking the post-road 160 feet below, terminating on a rock in the ground by the stable of Mr. W. C. Muschenheim. Half way down the flank of the hill toward the Hudson, just above the Boulevard Lafayette, will be found a complete breastwork about 120 feet long, facing northwest, and on the north brow of the hill another extremely strong earthwork about 60 feet in length overlooks and dominates the hill slope toward the one-time residence now known as the "Abbey Hotel." This hill descends, then rises again at the north to a less eminence, around which Fort Washington avenue has been carried in a curve through picturesque woods; thence its rocky face is almost of the character of a bluff on all sides, the great rocks standing sheer up out of the woods, their mossgrown sides overhanging the slopes up which the Hessians climbed, and on which by scores they fell and died.

Still further north across the little Inwood Valley rises a noble isolated hill crowned now with the picturesque spire of the chapel of St. Mary, just north of which, in the grounds of Mr. James McCreery was a little redoubt known as the Cock Hill fort.

On the easterly side of the island, from 155th street north to 192nd street, no defenses had been constructed, reliance being placed evidently in the precipitous nature of the hillside, though a British map shows a

little earthwork just below the Morris house, at the edge of the Harlem waters.

Beyond this, however, the hillside, though naturally strong, formed a weak side of the defences, as in several places the gullies formed by winter torrents afforded a means of ascent to the summit, though such an ascent would and eventually proved to be no easy task in the face of even a handful of defenders posted on the overhanging rocks which still retain their character of natural defences, along the woods of High Bridge Park above the Speedway.

At the northerly extremity of this easterly side of the heights is what is now known as Fort George, then Laurel hill, on the northern brow of which, where now the Schultheis Casino is offensively perched, was a strong earth and rock work overlooking the creek which extended at the foot of the hill from the Harlem into the salt meadows farmed by the Nagle, Dyckman and Post families. On the north side of this creek, long known as Sherman's, on a little isolated mound swept away by the city in its ill-timed development of the Inwood marshes into city streets, was a little outwork or battery of one gun designed to obstruct the passage of the postroad which here wound eastward to the bank of the Harlem, and perhaps at the same time to dispute the use of the creek as a landing place.

Such were the defences committed to the care of the men of 1776, and when they are considered to have been re-enforced by the natural features of the ground, by the dense woods that enshrouded them, by the felled timber and brushwood on points of access to them, and above all by the ignorance of their opponents as to their exact nature and whereabouts, it must be conceded that they presented a strength beyond that of ordinary fortifications.

In 1807, when Randel made his survey of the district, the earthworks were still some six or seven feet high. At the present time, they are still, with the exception of the south lines and those at Fort "George," which are completely destroyed, very largely traceable, notably the works on the water side, and those at Fort "Tryon." The difficulties of construction of these works can be appreciated by an examination of the locality. In every instance the loose material must have been conveyed considerable distances, as the tops of the eminences are, by nature's action, bare rocks, and sand and earth are found only in hollows and bottoms of the irregular hills. Thus it is probable that the material forming the great banks and platforms which composed the fort, was hauled from the low ground around the base of the eminence.

The interested visitors who will extend their rambles northward along the Boulevard Lafayette, or coming over the hill from the line of Broadway past Holyrood Church at 181st street, will find between the

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Boulevard and the river a stretch of parkland which, thanks to the unceasing exertions in time past of Hon. Andrew H. Green, has been preserved to illustrate in a most direct manner, the efforts of the patriots of 1776.

A picturesque and winding road, entered from Depot Lane, is joined by a little footpath from the Boulevard, and unitedly crossing the deep rock cutting of the Hudson river railroad, bring the observer on to the bold promontory which was known in Colonial times as Jeffrey's Hook, which standing far out into the noble river, narrows its width by its massive rocks, around which the impeded tide unceasingly surges.

On this point they will stand where passed and repassed nearly every man and officer engaged in the campaign, and where for many an anxious hour the men on whom the responsibility of the revolution chiefly laid, planned and worked to dispute the passage of the great water-way with the power of the British navy.

Within the arm made by the Hook, on its southern side, are two little sandy coves, whose beaches were the landing place of the traffic that was carried on between the troops on the island, and those quartered on the opposite heights.

A little way back from the point among the steep rocks that line the rugged pathway, the visitor will find the most complete existing relic of the work of the revolutionary troops in the battery or redoubt previously referred to, which was constructed in the fall of '76, by a battalion of Scotsmen of Malcolm's regiment under the command of Captain Robert Smith, and was planned, and its construction directed by a French volunteer engineer, Antoine Felix Imbert. It is at once the best preserved as it is the most militarily regular of the earthworks of the locality, evidencing the military training of its designer.

Standing within the grass-grown entrenchment and viewing the noble stream in both directions, one may appreciate better than at any other place, the determination and enthusiasm of the men of the revolution, and may obtain an excellent impression of the magnitude of the work they undertook in the defense of the estuary, on which so much of their labor was expended and in which so many poor fellows sacrificed liberty and life.

## IV.

## CAMP LIFE OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY ON THE HEIGHTS.

During the eventful month of August, 1776, the troops that garrisoned the upper end of the island were under the general command of Major General Heath, whose headquarters vacillated between the Blue Bell Tavern, then kept by Jacob Moore, the farmhouse of John Post at 210th street, on the margin of Harlem river, and Cox's Tavern at the north side of the Kingsbridge. His two divisions at Mount Washington and at Kingsbridge were under the direction respectively of Brigadier Generals Thomas Mifflin and George Clinton. It was Mifflin's corps that provided the timely re-inforcement, consisting of Shea's and Magaw's fine regiments, which on August 29th covered the masterly retreat from the disaster of Brooklyn, where the losses of the plucky southern regiments so decimated their number as to render a combination of the survivors necessary into a new combined regiment, which was again to distinguish itself at the climax of affairs on the Heights. After the retreat from Kip's Bay, and the succeeding and successful engagement known to those who took part in it as the Harlem Heights "affair," or the battle of "Monday," the 16th of September, the British forces settled down to await further re-inforcements, and the Americans to a course of laborious strengthening of all parts of their extended fronts, and a ceaseless watchfulness against surprise, while the British vessels made several efforts to gain a command of the passage of the Hudson.

Washington, upon whom the burden of these matters was increased by the necessities of organization of an effective army out of the rough and inexperienced material then afforded to him, was in constant anticipation of an attempt on the part of the enemy to land forces at some of the points along the Hudson shore and force his ragged army from their place of security. On the 22d, he directed Heath to have men ready to march south in such an emergency.

"There is a road," he wrote, "out of the Harlem flatlands that leads up to the hills and continues down the North river by Bloomingdale, De Lancy's, etc., which road I would have them march."

Such was the poverty of the defending force, that for this, and for similar purposes on the north front, he was obliged to contemplate withdrawing the artillery guarding the river passage; "two or even four pieces of cannon might be spared from Fort Washington to the post over the bridge, but query if it might not do to run them from thence when

occasion shall seem to require it," and for this purpose Knox was directed to have four carriages ready. Such was the constant strain on the attention of the commanders at this period.

From "Colonel Morris's at Harlem Heights," there issued after September 16th a daily round of general and special orders, evincing a tense watchfulness and concentration upon details which only such a man of affairs could prepare, and which afford many evidences of the life and its conditions upon which the troops then entered.

Powder is to be issued to each man, equal to 15 or 18 rounds, "also lead and cartridge paper that they may make their own cartridges."

"The men must account for every load not used in action." The need for them might ensue at any moment, day or night.

The men were, like volunteers and militiamen the world over, independent and careless, regardless of the necessary routine life of soldiery." "The General has, in riding through the camps, observed a shameful waste of provision, large pieces of beef not only thrown away, but left above ground to putrefy." The men are reminded that "while such practices continue, troops will be sickly." The General's eagle eye was on every detail. "Some of the camps nearest to Headquarters are very faulty in this respect." They are warned that if they do not show improvement they will be named in public. Camp orderlies are to be detailed to pick up rubbish and see that decent appearances are maintained.

Harsh terms had to be used to compel attention. The General had observed the "shameful inattention in some of the camps to decency and cleanliness, in providing necessaries and picking up the offal and filth of the camp," and hotly reprimanded the offenders.

The men in search of firewood would cut the timber forming the protective abattis. "Any soldier detected in so doing, without orders from the chief engineer, is to be sent to the Provost Guard and tried by a General Court Martial."

The arms and munitions were to receive special care of officers, and to be protected, in default of proper buildings, by bell-tents or painted tents spread over them. The poor fellows could be allowed no easy times. "All the troops are every morning to be under arms a little before break of day and continue till sunrise," but the practice of sending the men out on duty without breakfast was not to be continued.

Every day a working party of twelve hundred men, exclusive of those at Mount Washington, was paraded at 7 o'clock in the morning, and went to work on the entrenchments.

The men were often without any shelter. Wood was scarce, and planks and boards were precious. They were to be used only for flooring, and not for framing up shelters. "The building up tents with

boards is a practice peculiar to this army, and in our present situation, cannot be indulged without the greatest injury to the service. The boards brought into camp are for floors to the tents."

Their least material interests were not neglected. The Tory farmers, the traders and the hucksters coming into camp, from Westchester county, had taken advantage of the poor boys' needs and charged them exorbitantly for necessities. So they were put under regulation—"Various frauds, impositions and abuses being every day committed by traders and hucksters coming to this camp, the Quartermaster General and his assistant are to regulate prices particularly garden stuff, venison, cheese and butter." A market was to be established—"For the future all persons bringing any of the above articles immediately for sale, are to carry them to the foot of the glacis of the old fort, where the market is constantly to be held." The location of this camp market is not difficult to identify, the "old" fort was Fort Washington, the first started on the heights, its glacis in military parlance, was, in plain words, the slope extending from the fort, and the locality must of course have been as near the road as possible.

It is clear from the topography that the slope on the southeast towards the post road must have been the site, the field which lay facing the Blue Bell Tavern, and on which Holyrood Church now stands, and near which there had also been erected some kind of rough barracks for that part of the garrison specially in charge of the Fort.

The scene must have been an animated one, as the market was opened every morning at 8 o'clock, "to be allowed to continue till sunset." Hither came the camp cooks and the soldiers off duty, the farmers, and their womenfolks with their wagons, the hucksters with their ponies' panniers laden with garden truck and farm produce, while the Quartermaster's orderlies stood guard to see fair prices charged and no "corners" permitted.

"Should any person or persons be detected monopolizing or forestalling the market, they will be punished by a court martial and have all their goods seized for the sick of the hospital."

On one occasion a shipment of produce was received from the north of sufficient importance to receive special orders, namely, "Two hundred bushels of onions brought from Lake George," of which one-half were to be sold at the market, and the balance presumably taken on army account.

Notwithstanding every careful detail, many of the men became ill. Shelter was scanty, and the nights were cold.

"The battalion is very sickly," wrote Colonel Ewing, reporting to the friends of his Maryland boys, "owing to our lying on the cold ground, without straw or plank, which is not to be had, and medicine

very scarce. Great numbers of the soldiers are badly off for clothing." Not much wonder that some took to "plundering and stealing." William Hygens, an artillerist of Hamilton's company, was caught in the act, and was condemned to the old penalty, forty stripes save one.

Even the surgeons were short of necessities, and their mates were ordered to attend at the medicinal store between 8 and 10 A. M., to receive old linen to be torn up and converted into lint, and returned to the store.

No wonder also that the hearts of some failed them, and desertions occurred. Benjamin Allen and Joseph Chesher and some other privates in Malcolm's battalion were taken in an effort to steal away, and were ordered twenty lashes apiece.

Mutiny showed itself even among the junior commissioned officers, and two ensigns of Webb's Massachusetts regiment were tried and convicted of abusive language to their officers, and ordered to be publicly reprimanded for their conduct in front of their fellow officers.

The disaffection spread to some of the men, and a private of Sargent's force quartered at Kingsbridge mutinied and then tried to desert. His case was an aggravated one and a court martial condemned him to death. The sentence was sent to Headquarters to be passed on. With a sorrowful heart but a stern sense of duty, the General approved the finding, and orders the culprit from Kingsbridge to Headquarters, to be hanged on the morrow at 11 o'clock. An example must be set. The troops off duty are to be paraded on the grand parade at the time, and so on October 2, at some point on the open grounds around the Maunsell House near 147th street, James McCormick paid the penalty for his offence against his country's liberties.

Those who sacrificed their all for the cause had to contend not only with treachery but even with cowardice in some of their companions.

At 10 o'clock on September 30 and again on October 1, a court martial sat at "the white house near Headquarters" for the trial of Captains Weisner and Scott for "cowardice and misbehaviour" in the futile attack on Montessor's Island on the 23d of September. The court comprised Colonel Magaw, Lieutenant-Colonel Cadwalader and Captain Graydon, names afterward prominent in our history, and finding Weisner guilty, ordered him to be cashiered and the sentence published in the camp.

These were the small shadows on a broad picture of unselfish devotion to the cause on the part of the great body of patriots who through the fall of '76, lay camped along the heights of Harlem, waiting the issue in much patience, in necessities, in distresses, in tumults, in labors and in watchings.

## V.

## THE TRAP THAT FAILED.

The long course of comparative inaction on the part of the British forces, which succeeded their repulse on Morningside Heights, had given time for the strengthening of the American positions, but had also led to great anxiety on the part of their commanders as to the next move to be expected. The only apparent operation was the advance of a large part of the British floating force into the East river in the first week of October, and their landing on Montross's Island, indicating an intention of an attack on flank by way of Harlem or Morrisania, the latter of which, with the Harlem river extending between them, was not much to be feared by the American commanders. Work was feverishly pushed on the completion of the river obstruction. If this work could be effectively completed, it was felt that the great danger of an incursion up the Hudson by the British fleet in force could be averted, and on this important position, and its command by the fortifications on the Mount, the attention of the whole force was largely concentrated.

It appears somewhat inexplicable why the British authorities did not advance their naval force during the period of incomplete construction of this resistance to their passage.

The plans of William Howe appear, however, to have been laid rather with a view to the capture at one swoop of his watchful enemy and his whole force, than to any attempt merely to defeat him. While remembering the achievement of the retreat from Long Island, he probably conceived it quite impossible that Washington had the means to remove his force across the great Hudson estuary, and he preferred to wait until his land force should be re-inforced by the second division of German mercenaries and he should control the number of men sufficient to draw a line across Westchester county and bag the "Old Fox," with all his belongings, in his rocky lair and thus end the revolution at one blow. That he was also impelled by a desire to effect this result by his own land forces, rather than to allow the credit of the result to be gained by the Navy, is not to be wondered at in view of the jealousy often established between those forces, and the general subordination of the marine to the land forces in the British military system.

The great fleet in the East river was largely composed of the transports on which the Hessians were held almost virtual prisoners, until the time for the movement to be effected with least disturbance of the suspicions of the patriots.

The latter were therefore occupied by reconnaissances on their southerly front, which extended down to the flat lands of Harlem and along which the sentries were so close at times as to exchange remarks. The line of these slight intrenchments extended nearly north and south along the little bluffs which then existed on the Harlem west bank from 135th street to 155th street, most of which have been leveled by the city improvements except two or three blocks at the northern extremity.

The next step was to occupy their attention in the direction in which no real movement was intended, and on October 9, the three frigates, "Phoenix," "Roebuck" and "Tartar," with their tenders, which had been moored off Bloomingdale hove anchor and headed full at the river obstructions.

They were probably ordered forward on this particular date because their commanders had learned of the preparations for the sinking in the river within a few hours, of several more hulks.

The sudden incursion took the American forces at the Point by surprise, and imagining the squadron to be steering for an attack in force upon them, the crews of their various little vessels, slipped moorings and ran before the oncoming war vessels, while the batteries of the Mount and that upon the point opened a furious fire upon the squadron. Favored by wind and tide and perhaps guided by treacherous information, the frigates passed around or through the obstruction so far as completed, losing 3 officers and 6 men killed, and 18 wounded. Overhauled in the American craft, their leading vessel captured a trading schooner partly laden with supplies, and a row-galley, and the squadron eventually came to anchor off Dobbs Ferry, evidently a pre-arranged point of rendezvous.

From the point of view of present results, their advance had proved a success, but their demonstration of the inefficacy of the obstruction, and their presence in the rear of the American position, with, as it was supposed, troops on board, caused the very alarm for the safety of their line of retreat which the British Commander was apparently desirous of avoiding in advance of his troops' arrival in the rear of the Americans.

Three days elapsed before Howe embarked his men in the flatboats which had done so much service before in placing his troops in unexpected positions, and a friendly fog covered the movement of the expedition through the turbulent waters of Hell Gate. It was probably the same fog, however, which aided in the blunder of their landing on Throgs Neck, whence they were unable to emerge against Prescott's small force, and lost to the British scheme several invaluable days.

Upon the news reaching Washington, he rode out to the neighborhood, and on the 14th, Charles Lee was placed in command of a large

force composed of the "Flower of our Army," to divert the advance, the object of which had become apparent and was promptly discounted, as, at a council of war held on the 16th of October, it was decided to withdraw the main forces, leaving a garrison only on the Heights.

The withdrawal was well timed, but with the stores and baggage handled by insufficient transport, and by inexperienced men, it was a laborious and slow process, and was so far incomplete that when, on the 18th, the British, having transferred their forces to Pell's Point, at length got into motion on their proposed line of march, the delay effected by the plucky resistance of the amphibious heroes of Glover's Massachusetts regiment, sufficed to enable Washington's force to escape the closing jaw of the trap.

Howe's main object had failed. Still advancing, however, he sought to complete the line of communication with the squadron and to turn his enemy inside of it, but at White Plains he was again baffled, and on November 1, had the mortification of seeing his chief prize securely perched on the almost unassailable heights of North Castle.

Meantime, on October 27, the day on which Howe moved west from New Rochelle, an attack in force was made by the division left on the Island of Manhattan upon the Heights, and there seems to be good reason to suppose this was a pre-arranged affair, designed and probably timed so as to distract the attention of the American forces and to enable Howe the better to pass around to the north and effect the junction with the war vessels at Dobbs Ferry, which would complete his carefully planned operations.

As such, it of course failed in its object, but as a determined combined military and naval assault it took rank with the most serious engagements of the war.

It is remarkable that this operation, which really deserves to rank as a battle, having had some three thousand men engaged on either side, and occupying a whole day, has received so little attention, probably on account of the overshadowing importance of the engagement of the next morning in White Plains, and of the culminating event so soon succeeding it.

This "action," as Nathaniel Greene so modestly describes it, may be known, therefore, as the engagement of the 27th of October, 1776.

In the quiet of the early Sunday morning the sentries on the defensive earthworks at the southerly end of Washington Heights, perceived two war-vessels moving boldly up the Hudson, and word of their advent was hastily passed to the post commander, Robert Magaw, probably at the Headquarters house, but recently vacated by the commander-in-chief. At the same time, in the flatlands below the "Point of Rocks" the British forces, then under the command of Lieutenant-General the Right Hon-



ourable the Earl Percy, could be desisted moving forward to an attack. No time was to be lost, and the entire available forces were hurried into the southern lines of defense. The frigates came deliberately to anchor abreast of the first line of earthworks, and coolly proceeded to render it untenable by a flank fire. Their position was approximately abreast of 147th street, at which point a small battery formed a portion of this first line of intrenchment, which as has been described, extended across in a zig-zag fashion to the post-road, where defenses such as pits and barricades of felled timbers obstructed the steep ascent.

The one little trace which at this time remains, on the vacant lot on the east side of Broadway just north of 147th street, is probably a portion of the ramparts of the very battery here referred to.

Disposing his men to present the best front towards the land attack along the edge of the bluffs of Colonial Park to the Point of Rocks, Magaw effected there so warm a reply to the British field battery, that the assault was halted, and a musketry fire began which lasted through the day. Meantime, the energetic Colonel had decided to drag down from Fort Washington one of the heavy eighteen-pounder guns installed there, and succeeded in getting it into place while the battery across river at Fort Lee was rather ineffectively firing at the frigates.

Just as the men on the Jersey side gave up their efforts, Magaw got the 18-pounder into position and opened at short range on the vessels, when the Jersey artillerymen, seeing what had been done, promptly commenced to transfer two of their own heavy guns southwards towards Weehawken for the purpose of shortening their range.

Nathaniel Greene, in general command of the district, whose headquarters were at Fort Lee, came across, probably to the landing place at Jeffrey's Point, and made his way to the scene of action, where, however, finding that "Colonel Magaw had so happily disposed and arranged his men" as to put the British "out of conceit" with their original intentions, he remained a spectator, leaving the conduct of the day's operations in Magaw's hands.

The American artillerymen were enthusiastic at their opportunity. The frigates having anchored, and the tide still running up, they could not weigh, and therefore formed a steady mark for the men behind the gun who, ramming the eighteen-pounder with double shot, made a mark of the vessel highest up river and soon reduced her almost to a wreck.

"The confusion and distress that appeared on board the ship exceeds all description." She got out her boats, and with them her crew endeavored to wear her round, while from both shores a hail of well directed shot pierced her hull and tore her upper works. "Without doubt she lost a great number of men," and also without doubt she would have been lost to the British navy but for the timely and plucky

assistance of the open barges of her consort, which under the galling fire took her in tow, and all four pulling together they got sufficient way on her to work her out of range.

Meanwhile, "a smart fire with field pieces and mortars" went on upon the land side without intermission, but the repulse of the frigates discouraged any further attempt and the attacking force was withdrawn as evening came on.

Greene felt so secure of results that he left the scene at 3 o'clock, remarking in his report that "Our artillery behaved incomparably well. Colonel Magaw is charmed with their conduct in firing at the ship and in the field."

The loss of life on land was not great, "several of the enemy were killed, two or three our people got and brought off the field, and several more were left there," the accoutrements of one being the next day presented to a soldier who had distinguished himself by Lieutenant-Colonel Cadwalader.

On the American side but one man was killed, "by a shell that fell upon his head," and Major Coburn was wounded.

## VI.

## THE PATRIOTS' QUARTERS.

On the British map of the north part of New York Island are shown at different points along the line of the post-road from McGowan's Pass to the Blue Bell, certain structures marked "Barracks built by the Americans for their winter quarters and which they burnt upon the movement of the King's army to Frog's Point."

These are in several instances shown in enclosures or cultivated spaces, and must thus have included the farmhouses of the period. Confining our attention to those on the heights, the most southerly one is upon an eminence on the Hudson side probably about the line of 140th street; two between the first and second entrenchments, one being about 147th street near the Maunsell house and another farm near 153d street and Amsterdam avenue, also a farmhouse at 160th street on the St. Nicholas avenue, then a building on the position of that afterwards known as the Cross Keys Tavern at 161st street.

North of these are shown six or eight buildings situated along the highroad north of about 168th street, the first close to the west side of the road, the next on the rocks east at about 172d street, two others right and left of the highway at 176th street, that on the west being probably the then house of Blazius Moore, now inhabited by Mr. Robert B. Perkins, and most northerly of all, a group of several between Fort Washington and the road, on ground apparently the open farm land behind Holyrood Church.

That there were others on the mainland built or occupied for the use of the troops in the forts, there is evidence from American references to them.

The erection of these barracks formed part, and no small part of the work of those troops quartered during the summer upon the Island, and they must have been quite extensive structures, since it was in the general council on September 8 contemplated "that eight thousand men would be kept" for the defense of Mount Washington and its dependencies," and with the necessary stores, a large amount of cover must have been provided.

Those were not days of ready sawn lumber and wire nails, and the construction involved not merely the erection, but the hewing and sawing of the necessary timber and the forging of the nails and spikes. At the time of the removal of the troops to Westchester county, Greene wrote to Washington on October 24:

"Our people have had extreme hard duty. The common guards, common fatigue, and the extraordinary guards and extraordinary fatigue for the removal of the stores and forwarding the provisions has kept every man on duty." These labors consisted of the removal that month of the stores and provisions gathered during the summer on the Island and their conveyance by way of the King's Bridge to Washington's army in Westchester, and with the shortage of horse-flesh and wagons must have been a severe duty.

It was that anxious period when the future plans of the British were causing the greatest troubles of the patriot officers, after Hale's life had been sacrificed to their need for information, and when forebodings of the possible fate of Fort Washington were occupying the minds of the Commander and his trusted helpers.

"General Mifflin thinks it not advisable to pull the barracks down yet," continues Greene's letter of October 24—"he has hopes of our army returning to that ground for winter quarters."

Lee had before ridiculed Mifflin's ideas as to this possibility, and Greene added his fears that "if the enemy should throw in a thousand or fifteen hundred men" at Kingsbridge, they could cut off our communication effectually, and as the state of the barracks are they would find exceeding good cover for the men. But if we were to take the barracks down (even if the boards were not removed, it would in a great measure deprive them of that advantage."

He began to take preliminary precautions.

"I have directed all the wagons to be employed in picking up the scattered boards about the encampments." These were the boards that had formed the floors of the tents. "I believe, from what I saw yesterday in riding over the ground, they will amount to many thousands. As soon as we have got these together, I purpose to begin upon the barracks."

To Mifflin he wrote on the 28th of October:

"The people have been employed in getting the boards together at Fort Washington and the ferry. Some have been brought from Kingsbridge. To-day I sent up to Colonel Lasher (in command at Fort Independence on Tetards hill) to know what assistance he could give toward taking down the barracks and bringing off the boards, and had for answer that he had orders to burn the barracks, quit the post and join the army by way of the North river at the White Plains."

He feared the effect of this would be to oblige Magaw to draw his forces into the garrison, "as the enemy will have a passage open upon his back," which is just what eventually had to be done, the step allowing of the Hessians later establishing themselves and repairing the bridge.

"If the barracks are not burnt in the morning and the enemy don't press too hard upon us, we will try to get away some of the boards." While he had been writing, the barracks were reduced to ashes, and three days later the tardy enemy appeared on the scene to find "everything of value gotten away and the bridges cut down," both the King's and Dyckman's.

The inferences gathered from the foregoing letters show that the statement on the English engineer's map is an error. The barracks burnt were only those around Fort Independence and those on the Island were not destroyed but were in use by the American forces up to the time of the assault, and while some of them were possibly fired in that engagement, others proved the winter shelter for the alien force in garrison at the Fort, of which very advantage Greene had been so properly desirous of depriving them.

What became of them later can only be matter of conjecture. They were evidently of perishable materials, and it is only a probability that their foundations may have been of boulders. If so, some of the remains at the east of Broadway at 168th street may have been a part, but in the other situations a diligent search has failed to locate any traces of the structures which for many a month sheltered the poor boys who shivered the chill autumn nights away upon these heights, upon which so much of their hard duties and so many of their high hopes were expended.

## VII.

## WILLIAM DEMONT, TRAITOR.

Turning in his tracks at White Plains, William Howe found himself facing a new situation. His old enemy had escaped with nearly all his forces, and his plan of operation had failed of its object, with the exception that he now enclosed with his long extended lines the fastnesses which he had so long confronted without venturing to attack their unknown defenses.

Just how many had been left behind to hold the position was a doubtful element in the situation; whether enough to make an attack upon it a desperate and bloody affair, or a handful easily overcome. News probably reached him at this juncture of the indefinite result of Earl Percy's action of October 27, and of the crippling of two of his brother's fine frigates.

Some use had to be made of the hired troops, and they were therefore sent south to demonstrate against the north end of the Island.

Anticipating the likelihood of such a move, the officer in command of Fort Independence, Colonel Lasher, had been ordered to burn his barracks and abandon his post and so doing, and at the same time destroying the bridge over the creek, he had withdrawn, leaving Magaw's little garrison, without outer defenses, to hold those on the Island.

Forts known by the numbers 1 to 8 around the hills from Riverdale to Fordham were deserted, and the Hessian brigade under Lieutenant-General the Baron Wilhelm von Knyphausen marched into Kingsbridge.

Greene wrote anxiously to Washington to know if any attempt should be made in this new situation to hold the Inwood marsh and farm lands against so numerous a foe, as if so the garrison must be increased, and received reply leaving the matter to his own discretion, reminding him that the intention of the council of war (of October 16) had been to garrison the works, preserving the lower lines only as long as they could be maintained, and that the main object then was and still continued to be the retention of communication across the North river and "the enemy prevented from having a passage up and down."

For such a purpose the risk run by the garrison in its then position, was not too great, and in their unknown fastness there was not a man

but considered they could stave off any attack, as had been done on October 27, at any rate long enough to enable the force to be withdrawn, in case of defeat, by boat from Jeffrey's Hook under the guns of Fort Lee. But these reckonings did not take into account the probability of treachery, and that by its means the enemy might become informed of the exact weaknesses of the defense and the means of blocking their retreat.

Previous deserters there had been, but they were men of the ranks, and their accounts of what they had seen probably magnified the importance and extent of the defences.

There was one young man, however, in whose mind some rankling resentment or doubt had operated to induce him to waver from the cause he had well served, in whose power it was to obtain possession of the actual plans of the fortifications, and with whom therefore treachery became at once an alarming and dire blow to the American cause.

William Demont was a young ensign in Magaw's own regiment, who "being intelligent in points of duty," had been advanced to act as adjutant, a position which gave him charge of the documents of his commander. While he was a man of rather an ill-looking, coarse appearance, he had evidently gained the confidence of the authorities, as his appointment was due to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety.

Perhaps the continued seeming successes of the British had caused him to despair of the result of his country's cause, or perchance the absence of the guiding spirit of the revolution took the spirit out of him. But whatever the influencing motives in his mind which decided him to cast in his lot with the King he might well have done so without other reflection on his name than that of a deserter from a good cause to a poor one.

But Demont deliberately chose to make favor for himself and to injure his old-time companions by procuring and taking with him in his desertion the papers which would disclose the defense of the Heights and place his comrades at the mercy of an assaulting force.

The black treason of Arnold, which was foiled by discovery, was not so disastrous in its results as that of this youthful scoundrel, and no other traitor—and there were many—inflicted a more direct and deliberate injury upon his own personal associates than did Demont.

The estimate of the man's character formed by the British was not indiscriminating, as they afterwards employed him as a gatherer of news, a hirer of spies, and rewarded him only by the post of prison commissary in charge of the confinement of his own countrymen. His own hand has told us of the eventual result. Neglected, poor, broken and bitter, an exile in the great British capital, he resents the treatment

he has received, and quoting a better man, exclaims, "Had I have served my God as I have done my King, he would not thus have forsaken me." \*

In the appropriate darkness of the night of Saturday, November 2d, 1776, the young adjutant made his way southward, and evading the sentries, made his way down to the Harlem plain and entered the lines of the forces of Lieutenant-General the Earl Percy, where he handed over to that commander information and sketches of the defenses of the Mount so opportunely desirable for the plans of the general and so peculiarly capable of effecting the undoing of the defenders of the Heights.

We may well presume that little time was lost by Percy in remitting to his commander the important information he had gained on the details of the position destined soon to be attacked, and, allowing a sufficient time for riders to reach the neighborhood of White Plains, we can assume that some time between the 4th and 6th of November, the information had reached Howe.

His next movement had, however, already been decided. With no means of compelling his opponent to risk a general engagement, and with autumn advancing, the question of winter quarters for his large forces became urgent, and with Fort Washington held by his enemy he could by no means settle down for the winter in New York. Fort Washington must be taken at all costs. The camp was struck on the 5th, and the headquarters moved to Dobbs Ferry, whence after manœuvres evidently intended to confuse Washington and his officers as to their true intentions, and to gain time for a withdrawal of the trans-

\*The extent of Demont's treason might never have been known if he himself had not put it on paper, in the following letter written to the Rev. Dr. Peters:

Rev'd. Sir; Permit me to Trouble you with a Short recital of my Services in America which I Presume may be Deem'd among the Most Singular of any that will go to Upper Canada. On the 2d of Novr. 1776, I Sacrificed all I was Worth in the World to the Service of my King & Country and Joined the then Lord Percy; brought in with (me) the Plans of FORT WASHINGTON by which plans that Fortress was taken by his Majestys Troops the 16 instant, Together with 2,700 Prisoners and Stores & Ammunition to the amount of 1,800 Pound, at the same time I may with Justice Affirm from my Knowledge of the Works I saved the Lives of Many of his Majestys Subjects—these sir are facts well known to every General Officer which was there—and I may with Truth Declare from that time I Studied the Interest of my Country and Neglected my own—or in the Language of Cardinal Woolsey had I have served my God as I have done my King he would not Thus have Forsaken Me.

The following is a just account due me from Government which I have never been able to bring forward for Want of Sir William Erskine who once, when in Town Assured Me he'd Look into it but have never done it, otherways I should not now have been in Debt.

This, Sir, though it may not be in your Power to Get me, may Justify my being so much in Debt, & in Expectation of this Act being Paid together with another Dividend from the Express words of the Act, where it Says all under Ten Thousand pound Should be Paid without Deduction, I having received only £100 out of £407 which I Justified before the Commissioners.

Due for Baw, Batt & Forrage . . . . .	£112	7	0
For Engaging Guides, Getting intelligence, etc. . . . .	45	0	7
For doing duty as Commissary of Prisoners at Philadelphia, . . . . .	20	13	8
Paying Clerks, Stationary, etc. . . . .			

£182 10 3

The last Two Articles was cash Paid out of my Pocket which was Promised to be Refunded by Sirs Wm. Howe and Erskine.

I most Humbly Beg Pardon for the Length of this Letter & Shall Conclude without making some Masonae Remarks as at first intended. And Remain, Rev'd. Sir, with Dutiful Respect,

Your most Obedient and Most Humble Serv't,  
WILLIAM DEMONT

London, Januar 10th, 1782.







ports from Pell's Point, the British forces took a combined direction southward and concentrated on the 2th upon the hills of Fordham, below which the Hessian division was already encamped and was menacing the American position on its northern side.

The abandoned American works on the hills of Westchester known as Forts Nos. 1 to 8, including the wrecked Fort Independence, were promptly occupied by the combined forces, and that known as No. 8 was especially selected, from its commanding situation directly opposite Laurel Hill, for extension and armament by the British, and for the succeeding three days the troops were busy in emplacing guns at the spot.

Meanwhile on the flat land about the creek below, the mercenary force had not been idle, and advancing their skirmishers across the river they had seized on the height now known as Marble Hill on which they raised a redoubt named after the Brunswick Crown Prince, Charles Frederick, brother-in-law of King George of England. They had also pushed forward small entrenchments towards the foot of Inwood Hill, behind the woods of which the sharpshooters of the Americans were lurking.

On the 8th and 9th of November some bold attacks worthy of a description here were made by men of the Pennsylvania regiments on the advanced parties of the Hessians, and against considerable odds they had driven the latter back on their supports.

Such little efforts, however, were of small import in view of the military dispositions of the trained forces now closing in around the Heights.

## VIII.

## THE OPERATIONS AROUND INWOOD.

The abandonment of the Forts known as Nos. 1 to 8 on the Westchester side of the Harlem, and the appearance of the Hessian forces on the scene, were followed by the concentration of Magaw's men upon the hills of the Island, with orders to abandon the flat grounds of Inwood, the farms of Dyckman, Nagle and Post, and to confine their efforts to "stop the road between the mountains."

By turning all energies into strengthening a small circuit of defenses around the steep hillsides contiguous to the Fort, it would probably have been possible to hold the enemy at bay even after they should have possessed themselves of the flat lands at the north and even of part of the Heights on the south.

This general decision to hold the lines of intrenchments only as long as they could well be held, must be borne in mind in considering the course of events of the culminating occasion.

The interest of the situation was at this time largely at the north side then openly threatened by the Hessian army. Magaw reported on 7th of November: "We have just discovered that the enemy have brought down about 40 sail to Morrisania Point, ten of which are ships." The transports and fleet from Pell's Point and Throgs Neck were returning to the East river. "By this I am assured they are retreating and intend to pay us a visit."

"This forenoon we discovered several English officers on the plains on this side Kingsbridge," probably Hessian officers taking observations with a view to an attack which Knyphausen planned to make with his force in advance of the concentration of the British army.

The recent opening of the first surface railroad to the village of Inwood, rendering access available to that picturesque locality, renders it appropriate to record at this time some of the revolutionary occurrences which took place there at this juncture.

The majority of visitors to these heights are familiar with the view from resorts around Fort George, below which hill the low grounds to Kingsbridge are in plain sight, with the extension of the Speedway crossing the foot of the mount and extending to the Hudson at the point which in Colonial times was known as "Tubby Hook." The swelling sides of Inwood Hill rise, still covered with fine trees, through which glimpses of terraced gardens are seen, lining the steep ascent of the Bolton Road, the steeple of St. Mary's appropriately crowning the extreme summit. The Palisades, in the purple shades of the afternoon,

form a background of surpassing beauty, and the shining sweep of water visible on either hand is continued by the sinuous bends of the Harlem, so intimate to New Yorkers as Spuyten Duyvil creek.

A mere description of the features of interest with which this extremity of the island abounds would fill many articles, and must here be confined to those which appeared at the period with which our history has been so far dealing.

The post-road descending from the heights between Laurel Hill and Mount Washington at that time curved to the east on reaching the level lands and wound along the northern side of Sherman's creek, now disfigured by City improvements into a rigidly outlined dock, until it neared the bank of the Harlem, along which it proceeded northward, passing through the farms of Nagle and Dyckman, to the Bridge.

As has been previously stated, just at the head of Sherman creek, on a little mound, a small battery had been erected by the American forces to command the passage of the road, and on the summit of Inwood Hill, in what is now the property of Mr. James McCreery, was a little fort called after the local name of that mound the "Cockhill."

Below, in the valley on the bank of the Harlem, stood the farmhouse of John Post, locally known as the Century House, on the line of 212th street, an interesting building long preserved, only to fall a victim to fire in the summer of 1901.

Beyond, on Marble Hill, the Hessians were working like beavers on the ramparts of their fortifications. Pushing forward daily, they opened advanced breastworks on the rising ground, on which the house and estate of the Isham family has long since been situated, thus establishing themselves at a point somewhat on the flank of the Cockhill fort.

Their operations were being closely observed by the American outposts in the wooded hillsides, where active members could not for long forbear striking a blow at these newly arrived and dreaded opponents, and on November 8th and the following day efforts were made to dislodge the force which evidenced the mettle of the rank and file of Magaw's command.

"The scene," says an eye-witness, "lay on an eminence between the termination of Mount Washington and Kingsbridge, under the full command of a height in possession of our Hessian enemy."

On this spot a large rock existed, forming a sort of natural breastwork, behind which their musketeers were posted. Two of the Pennsylvanians had the hardihood to make their way up this hill in full view of the enemy in order to get a fair shot at the men behind the rock; their appearance rendering them a target for musketry and for the missiles of a field piece on Marble Hill. More men advanced to support them, and by their accurate shooting drove the Hessians to cover, which brought

out four companies of their main body to their relief. The little force of twenty Americans, though without any officers to direct them, then formed into three parties and with natural ability, two of these manœuvred round the rear of the rock and threatened the advancing troops, while the others rushed the position, drove out the guard, together with their wounded, and took their position and belongings. Uniting together, and indulging in a defiant cheer for the Congress, the little party, reinforced by a few stragglers from the hillsides, then undertook to defend their position against twenty times their number of opponents, who, advancing along the post-road, took shelter in an orchard, but were there stalled till nightfall, by the accurate fire of the American riflemen, who withdrew only under cover of darkness.

The success of this unorganized skirmish over the long dreaded enemy encouraged the defending forces to attempt a more serious brush with their opponents, who had repossessed themselves of the ground, and the following morning an organized assault was made under Lieutenant-Colonel Penrose of the Fifth Pennsylvania, and Major Hubley, whose little force rushed the position in so unexpected a manner as not only to carry the outworks but to dislodge the Hessian force from the dwelling house and barn of the farm hard by, notwithstanding an incessant but ill-directed fire from the enemy, covered by a small redoubt they had thrown up in the orchard and by the artillery of Fort Prince Charles.

About ten of the Hessians were killed and others wounded, and the American force, after firing the barn and the shelter huts of their opponents, remained in possession of the ground for the time being. These affairs, small in extent, had a distinctly disturbing effect on the arrangements then pending. The German general decided to make an attack in force without waiting further for the British, and on the following Monday, November 11, before daybreak, turned out his whole division at Kingsbridge with this intention. But it began to rain so heavily that the attempt had to be delayed until the day was so advanced that the attack would have been made with the disadvantage of their watchful opponents' observation. The troops were withdrawn and before another order was issued the arrival of the British general altered the situation and the German troops were held back for the combined operation which Howe contemplated.

## IX.

## THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM.

The arrangements for the assault on Fort Washington were designed and effected by Sir William Howe in a masterly manner. It is of course more than probable that he was decided in the methods, and was particularly guided in the timing of his attacks, by the detailed information gained from Demont, and was enabled to make an effectively fatal blow on the weakest point in the position and also to cut off the only means of retreat of the garrison.

His plan comprised a threefold attack. One assault was from the south on the lines several times previously attempted, but this time coincident with an attack by the mercenary troops on the more difficult ground at the north. As these two were in motion, he planned a third attempt with his finest troops of guards and light infantry on the precipitous hillside of Laurel Hill, the eastern side of the American position, under cover of the fire of those guns which he had recently mounted on the Fordham Hill at Fort "Number Eight," and in order to distract the attention of the resistance at this point he organized a fourth force, composed of hardy Highlanders under his command, who were to attempt a landing along the Harlem shore where no American fortifications had been constructed. It was this point of weakness which the traitor's information had afforded him, yet even with this knowledge a landing in face of the abrupt and wooded rocky height was likely to prove a desperate affair, and the dangerous duty was therefore committed to one of the best bodies of tried veterans in his army.

Its eventual success, although at a bloody price, almost unexpectedly crumpled up the American defense at the south, and proved the chief source of the entire success of the day's operations.

The other point in which Demont's plans aided the arrangements, was in showing that it was possible for the northern attacking force to work their way around on the Hudson shore, if covered by a war vessel in that river, and if enabled to pass the fortification now known as Fort Tryon, that they could creep in between the main fort and the water side. For this purpose the little frigate "Pearl," then lying near Spuyten Duyvil guarding two vessels with provisions for the Hessian army, was selected to act.

All preparations being made, on the afternoon of November 15, 1776, a boat put out from the Fordham water side bearing a flag of truce, under which an officer bore the usual formal demand upon the commandant for surrender of the post, coupled with the reminder that

a refusal would mean, as was then the custom of warfare, the extermination of the garrison in case of its capture.

This letter was delivered about 1 P. M. to Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Swope, commander of a detachment of Pennsylvania volunteers, a tried and trusted officer, who on Demont's desertion had been hastily appointed acting adjutant to the defending forces. By him conveyed to Robert Magaw, that officer lost no time in penning his answer, couched in a simplicity and nobility of language which reflects credit on his noble character.

"If I rightly understand," he wrote to Colonel Patterson, the courtly one-time interviewer of Washington, and adjutant of the army of attack, "the purport of your message from General Howe communicated to Colonel Swope, this post is to be immediately surrendered or the garrison put to the sword."

The inhumanity of the proposition impressed him to awake the generosity of his foe, in the possible eventuality of his defeat. "I rather think it a mistake, than a settled resolution in General Howe, to act a part so unworthy of himself and the British Nation." The threat, however, should be shown to be without effect. "Give me leave," he concluded, in a burst of hopeful patriotism, "to assure his Excellency that, actuated by the most glorious cause that mankind ever fought in, I am determined to defend this post to the very last extremity."

These lofty sentiments distinguish a man who in his devotion to duty ranks second to none in the struggle for liberty, and who deserves from his country a memorial hitherto denied even to his resting place, and on which, when it shall be erected, it may be hoped his own glowing words will fittingly be inscribed.

The original of this document was afterward found among his papers in Carlisle, and having fallen into the hands of an antiquarian, has, it is hoped, been preserved.

A brief consultation was held. The evident intention of an imminent attack led the small council of line officers in the fort to the conclusion that while their duty was plain, their generals should be made aware of the situation. A copy was promptly placed in the hands of an aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Bull, who had the same evening arrived with a reinforcement of men of Montgomery's regiment which was then under his command, and he was ordered to convey it to Washington, who had come over from North Castle to Fort Constitution to consult with Greene and others on the question of maintaining the fortress.

Unfortunately for the eventual result, Washington had that very afternoon ridden out to Hackensack village, and on Bull's arrival, the letter had to be sent after him. The contents being communicated to Nathaniel Greene and Israel Putnam, those generals thought the situa-



tion crucial enough to demand their prompt attention, and taking boat they made their way to the Fort, and interviewed the commandant and his associates, all of whom enthusiastically expressed their willingness to dispute the threatened assault, and reported their men in excellent spirits and determination.

Meanwhile, the messenger rode hot-foot to Hackensack, where the news was received by Washington, who rode in the gloom of night to the margin of the Palisades and descending to the water's edge took boat for the Fort. The point of debarkation was probably just at the foot of the gorge in which the Fort Lee Hotel now stands, opposite 158th street. As his boat approached the middle of the stream, it was met by another bearing the two general officers returning from the fort with a hopeful report, and the two little craft hung together in mid-stream, their anxious occupants engaged in low-toned consultation. Washington was urging his view of the danger of the garrison against the opinion of the others that it could hold its own, at least for several days.

The broad bosom of the river, the scene of this fateful conference, was full of actions of deep import on this eventful night. The shadows of the wet November day had deepened as night came on, and now hung low over the sentries on Jeffrey's Hook, and hiding the naked spars of the sunken hulks around which the tide swayed and surged, covered also the movements of a fleet of the sinister flatboats which, crowded to the gunwales with the pick of the redcoat army, were floating from Bloomingdale in silent security past the point.

In the dead of the night the bold manœuvre of floating these thirty boats up river past the batteries at Jeffrey's Hook, was being silently and successfully carried out, and Captains Molloy and Wilkinson of the Royal Navy who directed the adventurous expedition had the satisfaction of rounding the Inwood hill, and landing their passengers, consisting of two battalions of light infantry and two of guards, in safety on the shore below Valentine's hill, where they retired under the shelter of the thick forest growth which covered the hillsides, and awaited the advent of the day of action.

A glimpse of this bold flotilla, a single shot from a sentry's rifle, would have alarmed the generals, and have made evident the intention of an attack by means of the boats which had always been utilized for such purposes, ferrying troops over the Harlem, on the defensive protection of which so much dependence had been placed.

And how closely the two occurrences were to a conjunction that might have ended in the capture of the leading generals of the American forces at one swoop, may be gathered from the fact that the mid-stream meeting was after midnight, and that the troops were landed at

Fordham, and the boats were back again at work at Spuyten Duyvil before 5 A. M.

The result of the meeting of the generals was to still the doubts of the commander-in-chief for the present, and accepting his subordinates' view of the situation, he returned with them to the Jersey shore, to spend, we may be sure, an anxious and probably sleepless night.

The morning had advanced but a few hours before he was again afloat, with Greene, Putnam and Mercer, on their way to the Island to look at the situation and "determine what was best to be done." But for once Washington was too late, and "just at the instant we stepped on board the boat, the enemy made their appearance on the hill" on the south, while the furious cannonade increased from the east.

Their oarsmen rowing them briskly across the river, the Generals landed, probably directly opposite at 158th street, where a little stream descended from the hillside through what is now Audubon Park, and then ascending the hill, they made straight for headquarters, the Morris house, still evidently under the impression that the major attack must come from the south, in which direction Lord Percy's forces, having driven in the guards on the outposts in the Harlem plain, was by this time deploying to bring their field pieces into action, and the Hessian brigade forming its left was forcing its way down through the wooded hillside of Claremont above Manhattanville.

## X.

## THE COMPOSITION OF THE ARMIES OF ASSAULT AND DEFENSE.

It will be appropriate at this point to consider the composition and disposition of the British and German army at the assault, and of the forces opposed to each, the details of which, though somewhat dull in the reading, should be of particular interest in view of the many actual reminders of these regiments in the shape of the personal relics which have been found on the Heights.

The center of the British attack, was of course at Fordham, and the general orders of General Howe were issued up to the morning of the attack from De Lancey's mill on the Bronx, two miles in the rear.

The Fort afterward known as No. 8, on the Morris Heights, in which had been mounted about sixteen guns, thus became the center of the movement.

The forces on this side were all British, comprising about 3600 men, and were divided in two divisions, right and left, their mode of operation in each being the despatch of an assaulting force across the Harlem river, to be followed by a support, with a third force held in reserve. The right, which occupied the Fort, and of which the advanced part was concealed in the dense woods which then extended to the river's bank, some distance away to the north, was under the command of Lieutenant-General the Earl of Cornwallis, under whom was Brigadier-General Mathews, who was designated to lead the attack on Laurel Hill in person. The forces under his command were three battalions of the Light Infantry, the crack foot regiment which had done such good service on previous occasions, three battalions of the Grenadier Guards, the premier fighting force of the British army, and the Thirty-third foot regiment, held in reserve around the fort. Of the above, two battalions of the Light Infantry who were embarked at such a distance from Laurel Hill as to be out of effective range of the American guns, first crossed the stream, and were followed and supported by two battalions of the Guards, the other battalions of each being held as the second line of support.

The left division, which operated from what is now a point somewhat south of Highbridge, was in command of Brigadier-General Leslie, and was composed of two battalions of the Forty-second Royal Highland Regiment who, under Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Stirling, made the crossing of the river and the attack which turned the rear of the American southern forces. Their support was the Fifth Regiment,

which apparently remained on the Westchester side, and their reserve consisted of the Forty-ninth Regiment, with about sixteen field pieces operating at some point on the hillside.

The southern force, operating from the direction of Harlem, was the British left wing, and was under the command of Lieutenant-General the Right Honorable the Earl Percy, whose force was divided into two columns and made its attack in that formation. That nearest the Hudson consisted entirely of Hessians commanded by Brigadier-General Stirn, and was composed of three regiments.

The Regiment Erb-prinz, or the Hesse-Hanau regiment, frequently and officially known as the Regiment of Infantry of His Serene Highness the Hereditary Prince of Hesse-Cassel, was in point of fact the body of men raised by Prince William of Hanau, heir apparent of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, who acted as ruler of the principality of Hanau, part of his father's possessions. This fine regiment had left Wilhelmstadt on the transport "Three Sisters" on 26th-27th March, 1776, 668 strong, but had afterward given up its grenadier company of 112 men and officers, as did other regiments in order to make separate grenadier battalions, and thus went into action with five battalion companies, each of ninety-three privates and three drummers, totaling, with non-commissioned officers, 540 men, and having sixteen officers on the regimental staff. With this were brigaded the regiment of von Donop (its colonel, however, being engaged with the northern forces), and the Regiment von Mirbach, both having about the same strength, and all three having seen bloody work previously in the Long Island battle. This column, included therefore, about 1,600 men. The right column which Major-General George Jones commanded, was composed of two brigades, each of two British regiments. That known in orders as the Third Brigade, included the Tenth and the Thirty-seventh foot regiments, and that known as the Fourth Brigade, the Thirty-eighth and the Fifty-second foot, in all probably about 2,600 men and officers, preceded along the highway by a troop of the Seventeenth dragoons, and accompanied by their field artillery.

On the north, which was the right wing of the general position, was the German division under Knyphausen, who had under him about 4,130 men from Hesse-Cassel, and in addition the fine regiment of 670 men from Waldeck. Probably one regiment or two were left in camp across the King's Bridge, and in this way may be accounted for several mentioned by Carrington and other historians, which do not appear to have taken part in the advance, namely the regiments von Stein, von Dittforth and von Nesembach or Wissenbach. Those under arms were at first formed into two columns, the left under Major-General Schmidt, the right under Colonel Rall; each of four regiments. The left consisted

of the regiments Knyphausen, Wutginau, Hüyne and Bienau, the right of the regiments Rall, Alt von Lossberg, Waldeck, and Lieutenant-Colonel von Koehler's grenadiers. While waiting the signal to advance, a new disposition was made, and the division advanced to what eventually proved to be the heaviest part of the work of the day divided into three columns, and made its attack in three-column formation.

The left advanced along the post-road, accompanied by a field battery as far probably as where the gasworks are now situated, under the command of Major-General Schmidt, and included the grenadier regiment Rall, not directed by their colonel, who was acting as brigadier in charge of the right column. This regiment was known to be composed of bad material, hastily gathered by the Landgrave to fill the tale of men required by his contract. With this column also went the fusilier regiment von Knyphausen, named after the division commander, and the regiment of the Landgrave otherwise known as the Wutgenau, all preceded by a company of feld-jagers or chasseurs, a body of men recruited from the hunters and game-keepers of the German forests, and utilized with effect as scouts from their ability as sharpshooters, part of the company being mounted. They were commanded by Captain Medern of the Wutgenau regiment, who fell mortally wounded during the day. Knyphausen's own column, the center of the three, which took its way across the farm lands and marshes on the present line of Broadway toward Fort Tryon, and undertook the direct assault on the position, was also preceded by an avant-garde of 120 of the feld-jagers and forty picked men of the grenadiers, 160 in all, under a Captain Bornin; the whole skirmish line being under the general command of Colonel von Donop. Three regiments composed this column, von Hüyne, von Büнау, and the fusilier regiment known as the Alt von Lossberg, afterward captured at Trenton, but which now was selected to be led personally by the general, and formed, with the Rall regiment, the guard to receive the captured garrison.

The redoubtable Johann Gottlieb Rall, colonel of the regiment of that name, in the defeat and capture of which he was to fall a victim to an American bullet only a few weeks later, was a burly and determined German of the old school of hand-to-hand fighters, known for his reckless fighting qualities and obstinacy in battle not less than for his capacity with the bottle. Colonel Kemble describes him as, "noisy but not sullen, unacquainted with the language and a drunkard." On account of the sickness of Colonel Bose, he had been placed in charge of a brigade on November 10 and thus, no doubt at his own request, he was selected to lead the brigade column of the right whose share in the day's proceedings would be the heaviest and most dangerous. The heavy battery of the Hessians composed of 12-pounder guns and

howitzers, all of great weight, was to be taken round the rough hillside of Spuyten Duyvil creek and hauled up to the summit of Inwood Hill; there to be brought into action against the little guns of Fort Tryon. The First Grenadier battalion, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel von Koehler, about 520 men and officers, and the Waldeck regiment of 670 men and officers, formed this column, and was preceded by 100 picked men of the jagers under Major von Dechow. Having cleared the Cock-hill fort of its little guard, brought the guns into action near the site of the present House of Mercy, they followed up their success by advancing along the Hudson shore and getting in the flank and rear of the defenders of Fort Tryon, storming it successfully where others had failed, and eventually made their way to a point between Fort Washington and the river, where their presence effectually contributed to cut off the retreat of the garrison.

The fighting of these two regiments under Rall's command earned "the admiration of the whole British army," a tribute credited in more than one account to the Regiment Rall, which while it no doubt bore its share of the fighting around Durando's and along the east flank of the Mount, was more likely to have formed part of those who were there twice repulsed by the fire of the Southern men under Moses Rawlings.

The capture of Mount Washington was therefore effected by a force in actual action amounting to about 10,800 men, with reserves of about 3,600 more, a total of 14,400 in the combined armies.

The forces opposed to this combined army consisted only of that garrison which had been left on the withdrawal of the American army and a small detachment sent over during the afternoon preceeding the culminating event.

The men who defended the mount against this considerable force, were directed by Robert Magaw, commanding the entire post known as Fort Washington, and Colonel of the Fifth Pennsylvania regiment, a man of Scotch-Irish extraction, native of the town of Carlisle in Cumberland county, Pennsylvania, in which district he had recruited the men of his own regiment in the early part of the year. For many years he had been in good practice as a lawyer in his native town, and had acted as Attorney for the Crown on numerous occasions, but on the commencement of the agitations which culminated in the Revolution, warmly adopting the cause of liberty, he was selected as a member of the county committee formed to take action upon "the great objects of the public attention" and was soon one of the most active spirits in organizing a resistance to British misgovernment. Less than a year later he had entered into active service as Major of Thompson's battalion, with which he marched from Pennsylvania to Cambridge and took part in the siege of Boston. Returning home he organized the Fifth

Pennsylvania from men of his own county, and was soon ordered to New York, where he and his men were stationed at Fort Washington.

At the critical period after the Battle of Long Island he brought his fine regiment opportunely to the aid of his compatriots, and was in charge of the covering of the embarkation of troops. During the period of occupation of the Heights his legal knowledge was engaged in several courts-martial, and the dependence placed on his active exertions is demonstrated by the fact that he was not only maintained in command of the central fortification all that time but was in charge of the vitally important operation of blocking the tide-way, and was finally selected by the commander-in-chief as the man to whose charge the defense of the entire locality was entrusted.

His second in general command after the withdrawal of the army was Lambert Cadwalader, a comparatively young man of thirty-three years of age, who was a native of Trenton, N. J., and held as Lieutenant-Colonel the acting colonelcy of the Third Pennsylvania Regiment, largely composed of young men of good family of Philadelphia, among whom were David Lennox, Alexander Graydon, and a number of others of Scotch extraction.

His regiment, which numbered about 800 men, had been commanded by Colonel Shea, who had, however, abandoned the command, and resigned his commission while on leave of absence. It had seen some service also at Long Island and had done well in resisting the British advance on October 27.

The combination of volunteers known as "The Flying Camp," was a body of Pennsylvanians, chiefly men of Scotch-Irish birth, descendants of the hardy frontiersmen of Bucks, York and Lancaster counties, sturdy Presbyterians to whom the principles of the struggle strongly appealed, and whose aid in the emergency of the demand for troops had been spontaneously afforded. They had volunteered from the ranks of the Pennsylvania militia when that heterogeneous body had marched into Jersey and were now gathered on Laurel Hill, under the general command of William Baxter, a Bucks county man, seconded by Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Swope. The force included detachments known as Watts' and McAllister's battalions, and at the last moment a reinforcement from part of the same organization quartered on the Jersey shore was added in a battalion which had been known as Montgomery's, but which had been and was actually commanded by Thomas Bull, its Lieutenant-Colonel.

Among the officers of this corps were many men of education and position. Robert Darlington, a lieutenant in Watt's force, was "a ripe scholar and a polite gentleman," whose care in captivity received the attention of Washington, and Samuel Culbertson, a captain of Bull's

force, is described as a man "of fine literary abilities." Several of the companies had seen fierce fighting on Long Island, and that of Gerhart Graeff had lost all but eighteen of its number. The entire force amounted to about 500 men and officers.

A small force of about 250 Connecticut men of Bradley's regiment continued with the garrison and were quartered on the southern front, together with about 110 men of the "Rangers," or "Congress's Own," Knowlton's old command, which company had for weeks past done constant service as scouts, to the value of which the post commander testified when their removal was at one time contemplated.

The most aristocratic and best equipped body of men left in the garrison came from the South and included Colonel Haslett's Delaware boys, who had done much of the garrison duty around the fort. Previous to and at the time of the assault the South was also represented by a small regiment of 600 men composed of the remnants of the two corps of Maryland and Virginia riflemen which had escaped their comrades' fate in the fight at Brooklyn, had taken a prominent part in the Battle of Harlem Heights under Major Leitch, and, now gathered under the command of Moses Rawlings ranking as Lieutenant-Colonel, were conspicuous elements in the camp life of the army. This force contained some veterans of the Colonial campaigns, and notwithstanding a certain amount of assumed superiority and foppishness in details of dress, which had at times caused some antagonism between them and their ragged comrades of the Eastern militia, they bore hardships and sickness without complaint or desertion, and in the end proved, to a man, heroes of the defense.

Finally, a small body of artillerymen of the force gathered for the purpose in the early summer, who had exhibited a wonderful ability at their work on several occasions, was in charge of the cannon of the fortifications. At the final affair the men were only about one hundred in number, these having at least forty pieces to serve. Among the command was a man named John Corbin, a Pennsylvanian of York county, probably a Scotch-Irishman, his wife Margaret or Margery accompanying him, whose heroic exploit is described later.

The entire force of defense was thus composed of about 2,800 men and officers. The names of some have been preserved, notably of the rank and file of the little band of Congress's Own Rangers, commanded by Lemuel Holmes, and of the privates of that company of the Third Pennsylvania commanded by George Tudor, who made such an effective defense against the attack of the Highland battalions. Captain McCarter of McAllister's battalion led his men in resistance and fell at their head mortally wounded. Ensign Barnitz of Swope's had both legs broken, he being one of the little band of eighteen men commanded by



Gerhart Graeff. A list of all the names of those present, while appropriate, would be too lengthy for this description, and it can only be said of them that from humblest to highest all alike did their share where opportunity served. Overpowered, outnumbered, and outmanœuvred, they put up at any rate as good a defense as was practicable, and for every one that fell their enemy had to record at least three times as many. Exhausted, hungering and thirsting, their tears and curses, when they found that the fort on which they had placed so much faith had proved a trap in which they were caught, were not for themselves but for the harsh necessity of giving up of the fort committed by their beloved leader to their defense.

## XI.

## THE HOUR OF FATE.

While the gloom of night still shrouded the scene, and before the first streaks of dawn appeared over the Fordham hills, the men of the German troops were aroused and turned out in the chill darkness on the low grounds before the partially repaired Kings bridge, where the flat-boats, in which many of them had already made eventful trips, were lying, manned by British tars.

The regiments of Lossberg, of Knyphausen, Bienau, Huyne, Rall, and Wutgenau in turn were ordered forward, and while part entered the boats for a short ferriage across the little creek, others were making their way over the temporary and insecure staging with which the bridge had been repaired, and, all joining such of their companions as were already lodged on the extremity of the Island, were formed up at first in two divisions, the westward or right under shelter of the woods that extended around the foot of Marble Hill, under the command of the redoubtable Colonel Rall, and the eastward or left formed up in the open farmlands along the highroad under the direction of Major-General Schmidt, the whole of course being directed by Lieutenant-General Wilhelm von Knyphausen.

Their lofty brass-mounted caps, surmounting wigs powdered with flour and tallow, and their fiercely blackened moustachios over their heavy chin straps set off the brilliancy of uniforms not yet dulled by a year's service. Coats of blue with broad pipe-clayed belts covered yellow flapped waistcoats, and their yellow breeches were strapped into black gaiters extending above the knees.

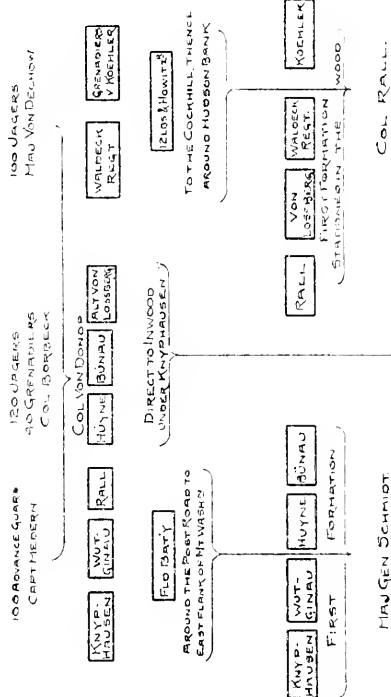
The regiment of Waldeck turned out from the ruins of Fort Independence, where they had been quartered, and descending to the neighborhood of the Farmer's bridge, were ferried across and formed upon the extreme right of the westward division, with the picked grenadier battalion commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel von Koehler.

The services of the tars in their flat boats were no sooner rendered to the German forces than they were required again to re-embark the storming force which they had brought in their adventurous trip from Bloomingdale. This force was apparently bivouacked in concealment under the close brushwood of the hillside near the foot of the road which extended from the ford or shallow part of the Harlem up through what is now known as Fordham to Delancey's Mills on the Boston post-road. Composed of the famous Light Infantry and Grenadier Guards, it formed a brigade under the command of Edward Matthews, then a

HUDSON RIVER

THE  
OCKHILL  
FORT

2012年12月



LIEUT GENL BARON  
VON KNYDHAUSEN

THE KINGS ROAD

FORT  
PRINCE.

THE HARLEM RIVER.



Brigadier-General, whose gallant career, to which his share in this day's events added lustre, was destined to end ere the Revolution had run its course in an awful death in the far East at the hands of Tippoo Sahib.

The boats were taken to the point where the men were ready for embarkation, whose advance had been arranged to be the signal for the opening of the action and by which the other movements were to be timed. But owing to some lack of foresight on the part of the general staff, a vexatious delay occurred, for the boats could not reach the shore on account of the low tide, the effects of which had not been reckoned on.

The advance guard of the Hessian Brigade, however, taking time as their guide, pushed their way forward into the Inwood hillside, and a party under Ensign Joseph Wiedeshlat had already proceeded some distance up its sides when recalled by direct order from the division general. Had the Hessian force been permitted then to push forward, it was the judgment of the young officer above referred to, who afterward was engaged in the thick of the hand-to-hand fighting, that the losses of the Germans would not have been so severe, presumably because, under cover of the early dusk they could have avoided the zone of fire of the riflemen among the rocks and trees. But the incidence of the order of the several attacks was a positive part of the British General's plan, and the German army was formed up and waited all the early hours of the day for their signal to advance.

At the hour of 7, however, the battery of heavy field pieces lodged in what was afterward known as Fort No. 8 on the University Heights promptly opened fire upon the wooded sides of Laurel Hill, and their heavy detonations echoed over the Heights, bringing every American soldier to the alert. For several hours these sounds, increased by the explosions of the Hessian field battery which was advanced along the post-road to near the house of John Post, was the only result of the elaborate preparations. The rain of shot and shell on Laurel Hill must have been severe and that on the slopes of Fort Tryon hardly less so to the scanty forces crouching behind rocks and trees awaiting some opportunity of reply to the fierce hail of missiles. Ere the Americans could make out in the morning mists the disposition of their foes in these directions, another discharge of thunderous sound came from the northwest, as His Britannic Majesty's well-handled little frigate "Pearl" came tacking from her anchorage near Riverdale and let fly at Laurel Hill with her ponderous artillery. Parts of shell and great bar shot that have been disinterred at Fort George evidence that the ship must have come about near the end of the little Inwood valley through which a view of Fort George is to be obtained, and at this long range flung her terrible missiles charged with nails and spikes upon the rear of the boys of the Flying Camps patiently waiting what should befall.

The morning wore on, and at about half-past 8 another battery opened from the flanks of the Westchester hillside near Woody Crest, the field pieces of the left division of the British center. It was now clear day and the first shot was aimed with deadly intent at a little group of anxious American officers who, somewhere near Headquarters, were watching the fusillade upon the Laurel Hill a mile and a half north of them.

Another two hours elapsed before the appearance on the Bloomingdale Heights of the Hessian column, and on the Harlem plain of the British Brigade, whose field pieces soon began to add to the burden of sound now surrounding the devoted defenders of the Mount, as these imposing forces, deploying slowly with military precision, advanced into the Hollow way, and along the Harlem lane into the Albany post-road.

And now the rising tide from the Hudson is being felt in the Harlem and the fateful flat boats received their burden of eager infantry who, crowding them to the gunwales, with fixed bayonets, were rowed down the river to the landing point near Sherman's creek. The same tide swelling the waters from the East river rose against the lower side of the dam of MacCombs mill, and helped a little flotilla of ships' barges, which, urged by another crew of tars, were boldly hoisted over the difference in level and set afloat upon the upper water towards the scene of crucial action. Here they made their way to the little creek opposite 173d street and embarked two battalions of the renowned Forty-second Royal Highlanders, their gallant commander Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Sterling, we may be sure, at their head. For many a fine brawny fellow that was the last boat trip he ever took, and had the force hastily made available to oppose them numbered anything like the same force, very few of them could have returned to tell the tale of this attack.

Under the furious fire from Fort Number Eight, directed overhead into the wooded flank of Laurel Hill, Matthew's force of Light Infantry were borne along by the sturdy stroke of the oars of the man-o'-war's men, who drove their boats into the opening of Sherman's creek, where the infantry, springing ashore, spread around the foot of the hill near the line of 194th street, where now the Speedway widens on its turn towards Inwood.

Plunging into the marshy banks under brisk fire from the Pennsylvania men behind the wet rocks and trees, the gallant light infantry men charged, bayonet in hand, up the steeps, slipping on the dripping leaves falling about them, yet protected somewhat as they advanced from the fire of the guns and riflemen overhead by the very precipitous character of the ground.

Their advance covered the landing of the grenadier guards who on

the return of the boats were embarked, and were probably almost unmolested by the defenders of Laurel Hill who were then fully engaged.

This impetuous onset of nearly two thousand alert and active trained light infantry, already somewhat accustomed to the conditions of American warfare, whose advance was preceded as they clambered upwards by the hail of grape and round shot from the batteries across the river, was resisted only by the detachments of Pennsylvania volunteers strung out through the woods and manning the redoubt known as the Laurel Hill fort on the brink of the hillside, the guns of which, though they dominated the creek and river below, formed little protection against a force advancing up the flank of the hill. They also held the little redoubt across the Sherman creek on the post-road, but this being taken in rear by the success of the British, was necessarily promptly abandoned, though its gun was removed in time to prevent its capture.

The British advance, which might almost be better described as a clamber, proved irresistible. The swarming infantry men, unencumbered with much accoutrement were backed by the giants of the guards battalions, who in turn, had they required it, would have been supported by the Thirty-third regiment, held in reserve on the east bank of the river.

The details of the defense have been only vaguely described, but its nature can be gathered from the fact that Baxter, personally encouraging his men in hand-to-hand conflict, was run through by the sword of a British officer, and died thus gallantly his face to his enemy, his body being left in their possession. Over his grave, which his foes, not inappreciative, are said to have marked with two rough boulders, a beer saloon forms a present shelter, and the least appropriate recognition of this good servant of the cause of liberty will be made when sympathetic hands mark the spot, which is near the line of 192d street, close to the redoubt, demolished only in recent years, which he helped to defend.

The resistance was stubborn. Of Swope's force, the company commanded by Captain Jacob Dritt lost heavily, and Ensign Barnitz was wounded in both legs so severely that fifteen months later when exchanged he was carried to his home in York county on a litter. Captain McCarter of McAllister's battalion was mortally wounded and his company suffered severely.

As their commander fell his men retreated, and Matthews and his men found themselves almost before they had been expected to do so in possession of the commanding hilltop, on which the guns of Fort Washington opened, across the wooded depth in which the post-road wound its hidden way.

Pushing cautiously forward, Matthews' force opened out and made their way slowly westward toward the Mount, and also working south

to the present position of High Bridge, they joined hands with the Scotch force, whose adventures must later be described.

As this attack on Laurel Hill proceeded, events had advanced elsewhere. The Hessian main or left division stood at attention until the British could be descried on the summit of Laurel Hill but part of the right column had moved forward under Colonel Rall, and followed by the heavy field battery and howitzers had struck up the Cockhill, and meeting but a few opponents had easily turned them out of the little fort on the summit.

Pushing their way over to the river side the Waldeckers and the grenadiers turned southwards along its wooded and precipitous flank, and soon found themselves at Tubby Hook, now the end of Dyckman street, above which rose the steep height we now know as Fort Tryon. Its precipitous sides were marred by obstructions of piled stones and felled timber and brush, forming three abattis one above the other, behind which the riflemen of the Maryland and Virginian combined regiment were ensconced.

On the summit of this hill, which is now intersected by the Fort Washington Ridge road, on a commanding eminence overlooking the Hudson as well as the eastern sides, the American engineers had constructed the small redoubt, with a breastwork of boulders across the summit from west to east, which was considered as the north extension of the main fort, and was not otherwise designated.

Its present title is the complimentary designation bestowed upon it by the British, and it seems remarkable that the name of a governor by no means particularly distinguished and certainly in no sense commendable as a ruler of New York, should be retained for a spot that should be peculiarly dear to the hearts of Americans. As Fort Tryon, we are, however, compelled to refer to it, and in it at the time of the assault a few artillerymen of the company under Captain Pierce, handled the two small cannon with which it was armed. Of these men, one was John Corbin, a Pennsylvania private. He was accompanied by his wife, a woman whose devotion to her husband had led her to make the long journey from their home, to share with him the privations of camp life on the Heights. Now during the thickest part of the fighting which ensued, as men fell around her, and hands were needed to work the guns, she took a man's part in cleaning and loading until, at the most desperate juncture, her husband fell dead at her feet, stricken through the breast by the bullet from a German musket. Then, animated by the emergency, she took the gun into her own charge, and, while her feelings must have been agonized with sorrow, loaded and fired the gun herself, "with skill and vigor," until a charge of grape shot, whistling up from the field battery below, passed around her, three of the shot striking and tearing her in a terrible manner.



The Hessian main body, amounting to about 4,000 men, had now advanced from the neighborhood of the King's bridge, Schmidt's division taking the line of the post-road, preceded by their detachment of scouts and the field artillery, which latter at first came into action near Post's farm at 212th street and afterward advanced probably to the site of the present gas works near the line of 200th street, in which locality parts of gun limbers and various sized cannon balls have been discovered. The remaining part of the right division was taken by Knyphausen across the farm lands, making directly towards the lofty hillside on which the southern riflemen awaited them with grim determination. Plunging into the marshes and wading through the long rushes, whose long brown stalks hid the treacherous surface, this body of men bravely advanced, and re-forming over the present site of Inwood village, were sent in charging formation at the hillside. A withering fire from the cover of rocks and trees met their advance, and the men retired. A second storming advance was formed, probably from the supports arriving on the scene, and was again broken, though Knyphausen in person led his men against the steep defense, tearing down with his own hands the abattis of brushwood, and climbing over the rocks with such hardy exposure that his officers marveled that he was not killed by the hail of bullets around him. The riflemen could be seen as they fired, and then ran from cover to load to another cover, to fire again, each man knowing that if caught no quarter would be shown him, inasmuch as concealed riflemen were by the stern military usage of the times, to which the German force had been trained, entitled only to the mercy of the bayonet.

Meantime, Schmidt's division had moved up, and from it men were spared to extend along the eastern flank of the hill, where still the wooded steeps bear the same character they then exhibited, while Rall's command pressed hard upon the Hudson side. The little defending force thus were almost surrounded, but with stubborn determination repelled the assaulting parties by their accurate shooting till their guns became too hot to handle or too faint to load. The cannonading was described by Ensign Wiedeshlat as being terrible. The marksmen evidently picked off the officers. Captain Medern of the Wutgenau and his Lieutenant, von Lowenfeld, both fell mortally wounded. Colonel von Bork and Captain Barkhausen and Lieutenant Briede of the Knyphausen, were all mortally wounded, and Captain Walther of the Rall regiment was killed, with many others.

For more than two hours this conflict raged unceasingly, and was observed by Washington with the most intense and hopeful interest, during which period events on the south side were transpiring which can now be appropriately described.

## XII.

## THE DEFENSE ON THE SOUTH.

In the accounts which have been published of the battle of Mount Washington, very scanty descriptions are given of the events which took place at the south side, and the impression is afforded, either by inference or directly, that the defense on this side collapsed through incompetency or cowardice. These views have been formed by lack of understanding of the position and nature not only of the enormous duty imposed upon the slender defending force but of the circumstances in which they were placed. A closer study of the part which they played in the affairs of the day will prove of interest in correcting these misapprehensions, and will show that theirs was no unusual or ill-advised action.

We may here repeat the description of the line of defenses committed to the charge of those composing the right wing of the American army which consisted of those three lines of earthworks formed right across the heights, composed of trenches and embankments formed into the semblance of small redoubts. The advanced outposts occupied the small breastworks on the edge of the hillside overlooking what is now Manhattanville and another on the Point of Rocks at about 127th street, overlooking the post-road as it approached Breakneck Hill arising to the heights, just above which the first line of works zigzagged across the heights about the lines of 145th to 147th street on the west, thence eastward to 147th street, ending just across the post-road on its east side, and following the contour of the rising ground, which may still be faintly traced in that vicinity.

We learn from the interesting though somewhat pessimistic recollections published after the Revolution, by Captain Alexander Graydon, that the first line was only "a slight intrenchment with a few weak bastions, without platforms for cannon, and furnished with no other ordnance than a few old iron pieces of small calibre, scarcely fit for use, and an iron six-pounder mounted on trucks." The second intrenchment also crossed the heights almost on the lines of 154th to 155th street, occupying the rocky eminences now enclosed as part of Trinity Church cemetery, on one of the retaining walls of which, in Broadway, a tablet appropriately marks this interesting locality. On the east side this line ended in a redoubt or battery located on the edge of the bluff near where Troger's road house now stands at St. Nicholas place, from which point the present handsome viaduct descends towards the Macomb's Dam Bridge.

In one of the batteries, probably that at this point, there was an eighteen-pounder gun, which may have been that which had done service in the preceding naval engagement. It seems doubtful however, if it came at all into action, though the British refer to it as an element of the defense which opposed them.

The third line, then in an incomplete state, had been laid out as intrenchments extending across part of the Island from 159th street on the west to 162d street on the east. It was formed around a battery on the abrupt hill on which the old Lewis homestead is now falling into decay, overlooking the commencement of the Boulevard Lafayette. Extending eastward, the line crossed the Fort Washington avenue on a ledge of rocks still to be followed, probably embracing an old barnyard, the wall of which exists on the east side of Broadway at 161st street. The line then extended towards and nearly to the post-road abreast of Colonel Morris's residence, ending where 162d street now intersects the St. Nicholas avenue, and whence the new electric road diverges from Amsterdam avenue on its way to Inwood.

The command of all these lines was, as we have already recorded, committed to Lambert Cadwalader, acting colonel commanding the Third Pennsylvania regiment, who was then but thirty-three years of age. Under him was Lieutenant-Colonel Will Butler, one of that famous fighting family of five brothers of the Cumberland valley, and Major Thomas Church, while Captains George Tudor, Thomas Byles, and Alexander Graydon, commanded companies. A detachment of 110 men of the Connecticut "Congress's Own" Rangers—which had been commanded by Thomas Knowlton and had taken a prominent part in the Battle of Harlem Heights—were employed as scouts and marksmen. They were commanded by Captain Lemuel Holmes of New Hampshire with Lieutenants Oliver Babcock of Stonington and Jesse Grant of Litchfield, the former of whom should ever be remembered for his care and attention to the sick prisoners in New York, to which he fell a victim by disease. The whole force comprised only about 800 men, including a re-inforcement of a hundred militia which reached the lines during the engagement which ensued.

"I think," says Graydon, "it was between 7 and 8 o'clock when they gave us the first shot from one of their batteries on the other side of the Harlem river. It was well directed at a cluster of us that were standing together observing their movements; but it fell short by about ten or fifteen yards and bounded over the spot we had precipitately abandoned."

"About 10 o'clock in the morning," as he relates, "a large body of the enemy appeared in Harlem plains preceded by their field pieces, and advanced with their whole body toward a rocky point of the heights."

that is, Point of Rocks, "which skirted the plains in a southern direction from the first line and at a considerable distance from it." On the west the Hessian column, which Graydon could not of course then distinguish, came north from Bloomingdale, and descending the Claremont hill to the Manhattan valley, then known as the "Hollow way," rushed the little work on the height above.

"The British, meanwhile," commencing a brisk fire on the small work constructed on the point, "drove out the party which held it, consisting of twenty men, and took possession of it, the men retiring with the picket guard to the first line. They killed a man of the pickets on the front and drove the pickets in."

He then tells how the enemy advanced in column while an advanced party "pushed forward and took possession of a small unoccupied work in front of the first line, from whence they opened their fire with some field pieces and a howitzer," without effect. The Americans, waiting until the attacking force came within range, opened a fire from their solitary effective piece, the wheeled six-pounder, "on which the whole column took post behind a piece of woods" on their left where, he says they remained. It was just at this time that Washington, Greene and the other generals were making their way towards the Morris house to observe the course of events, and Greene noted that the enemy made several marches to the right and left; "I suppose to reconnoitre the fortifications and the lines." Graydon relates that it being supposed the enemy intended to attack from behind the wood, that side of the intrenchments was strengthened, and says they slowly began to form behind the verge of the wood, giving an occasional discharge from their artillery.

It was at this critical juncture that a hasty report reached Cadwalader of the embarkation of the Highlanders on the Harlem, with the evident intention of taking his forces in the rear, and from his scanty force he detached fifty men under the command of Captain David Lennox to oppose the landing.

Word was evidently sent back by this officer that he had a large force to resist, in point of fact the entire Forty-second Regiment, then 800 strong, and again Cadwalader weakened his little forces by "a hundred more with Captains Edwards and Tudor," leaving but 550 in all with which to hold nearly a mile of front.

To the details of the Highlanders' part in the affair we must return later, and continue to follow the course of the events on the south front with Captain Graydon.

That officer proposed to his commander that he should throw his company into a small work or ravelin about 200 yards in advance of the main intrenchment, which must have stood about on the line of 143d

street, near Broadway, close to the west of the property of the Colored Orphan Asylum, which on taking possession they found to be but knee high, affording no protection, and so were obliged to abandon it.

On this the Hessians emerged in column and opened a scattering and ineffective fire, being apparently very poor marksmen, and Graydon and his men were sent over to the right to protect the Hudson side of the hill, and were stationed just where the high ground began to decline abruptly towards the river. Cut off from view of the field of action, he did not see the general advance of the enemy, but General Greene's account is that "the enemy began a severe cannonade with several field pieces. Our guard soon fled, the enemy advanced up to the second line," and at this juncture Washington arrived on the scene.

"There we all stood," he relates, "in a very awkward position. As the disposition was made, and the enemy advancing, we durst not attempt any new disposition, indeed we saw nothing amiss." But a few minutes changed the view of the situation, as the advance of the assault on the banks of the Harlem was heard, and pinched between the two forces, both Cadwalader's men as well as the general and his staff were in imminent danger of capture, and a very little delay might easily have resulted in an event which would have entirely turned the course of the Revolution.

"We all urged his Excellency to come off—I offered to stay, General Putnam did the same, and so did General Mercer, but his Excellency thought it best for us all to come off together, which we did about half an hour before the enemy surrounded the fort."

This would seem to involve the officers having fallen back with the line of defenders along the line of the "river road," a farmer's track through the woods parallel with the present Fort Washington avenue, probably below it near the new Boulevard Lafayette, and it may be presumed their boat met them at or near Jeffrey's Hook. They were hastily pulled across to the Jersey shore, and ascending the heights, observed the further progress of the engagement from the edge of the Palisades.

Meantime, that part of the Third Pennsylvanians on the Hudson side were concealed from the course of events, and only learned, by the retirement of their neighbors on the hill top, that a retreat was in operation.

Graydon says his company retired in good order, "which is more than I can say of my neighbor or his corps," who thus may appear to have been the men that gave General Greene occasion to speak of their retirement as a "disorderly retreat." Graydon asserts of his corps that his men "were always obedient and ready to partake of any danger."

As the whole body fell back on the 155th street line the little forces

opposing the Highlanders in the rear were drawing in towards it from the Harlem river side, fighting fiercely around the Morris house.

It has been in most accounts assumed that Cadwalader's men, taken in panic at the fight behind them, fell back of their own volition without resistance, but from the personal account of Lieutenant-Colonel Bull, which has come to hand lately, we find that acting as Aide-de-Camp to Magaw, and mounted on one of the two horses in the American commands, he was sent by that commander "to call in Colonel Cadwalader."

Magaw had previously sent Bull with a detachment to aid Lennox in his resistance, and, therefore, was aware of the imminent danger of the forces of Cadwalader being caught between two fires. It was, therefore, at the orders of the commander that the Pennsylvanians retired from 155th street, and so stubbornly did they face the enemy, that before word could be conveyed to Graydon, on the far west side, his company was nearly caught by the advance of a mounted corps, presumably the troop of the dragoons.

The Highland attack had by this time reached a point south of the Morris house near 159th street, and the defending force, abandoning the third line at 159th street, which were thus of course taken in rear, pursued "the road which led to the fort under the heights by the North river, arriving there with little or no loss."

On his way back, Colonel Bull "took on his horse behind him a wounded soldier and brought him into the Fort."

This road of retreat is not shown on the maps of the engagement or of their period, and was probably a mere track through the woods about on and in part a little above the line of the present Boulevard Lafayette. The British map shows the British forces following the line of the post-road, and the Hessian column a line nearly parallel to the Fort Washington avenue. It was probably therefore, the Hessian Brigade which was engaged with Cadwalader's men, as "battling all the way," they fell back through the woods to the fort."

Lord Percy's column slowly advanced along the post-road, the piquets working their way through the woods on either flank, through which whistled the occasional bullets of American sharpshooters while the round shot from the fort and from the field batteries screeched through the timber.

The road from the Morris House to the fort had very few signs of human habitation. The "white house" hard by was soon entered and utilized as a resting place, the Highland wounded probably being conveyed there. At about the line of 169th street was some sort of a building, probably a wooden barrack, and the Oblinus farmhouse stood just west of the road at 179th street. Ere this was reached the British advance was stayed, pending the result of the fighting at the north.

## XIII.

## THE HIGHLANDERS' SURPRISE.

In the various descriptions of the attack on Mount Washington hitherto published brief reference only is made to that part of the assault upon the Heights, which was in the British accounts described as the "third attack, intended as a feint." Little detailed attention has been given in any histories to this most important element in the day's operations and scant justice afforded to the gallantry displayed on both sides. There has even been some doubt as to the precise locality where this affair took place, owing to the vague way in which the several writers have described the scene.

The most definite evidence is, of course, the British map of the operations prepared by Claude Sauthier "immediately after" the event by the order of the Right Honorable Earl Percy, which aims to show the lines of the advance of the several branches of the attacking forces. While the maker of the map is remarkably well informed in the general details of the locality, it is nevertheless probable that the position of certain forces must be taken as that which they occupied at some part of the action and does not exhibit the whole of their movements. This can be shown to be the case with the part played by the 800 men of the Forty-second Regiment of Highlanders, who, under the command of their colonel, Sir Thomas Sterling, and supported by two battalions of the Second Brigade, broke in on the center of the east front, being the weakest part of the American position, and certainly turned the scale of the fortune of the day against the defending forces.

The British map shows the point of their embarkation to have been a little creek on the Morrisania side of the "Harlem creek," as the map describes the river, exactly opposite the line of 173d street, and which although now almost obliterated by a dock and by the line of the railroad, may yet be traced in the marsh exposed at low tide.

The course of the boats conveying this force is marked on the map to a landing at another little creek on the Manhattan shore which is placed evidently too far to the north, almost parallel with Fort Washington, but an examination of old maps before the Speedway was constructed shows that precisely such a formation existed exactly at the north side of the foot of High Bridge, opposite the point of embarkation and at the foot of a steep ravine.

On the other hand, the written accounts of General Greene and the personal narrations of Captain Alexander Graydon both agree in the statement that the attackers gained the heights at or near the Morris

House, which is located on the line of 161st street, while in his written report General Howe said they dropped down the river.

The apparent contradiction may not be so in reality. The boats must have made more than one trip, and the attacking force on landing in all probability spread out, and while part charged up the line of the zigzag lane in the gorge which now emerges on Amsterdam avenue at 175th street the major body forced their way southwards trying to find a way up between the precipitous rocks of High Bridge Park, which overhung the old marshy verge of the river and still exhibit the enormous strength of the position at that point. Probably they found their way up through the gorge or ravine which is formed by the stream at 165th and 166th streets, which would bring them on the summit just to the rear of the headquarters building.

Standing on the edge of "Edgecombe" avenue the outlines of this depression can still be traced and will be seen to be the only place of its kind affording a reasonable chance of access up the bluff.

Reforming on the summit, we learn "they immediately advanced and took possession of the ground in advance of and a little below (that is, southwards) Morris house," and a sharp fight ensued as they came on the rear of the forces guarding the south or right wing of the general American position.

Some part of the force may have made or attempted a landing at the base of this ravine which was in those times a marshy formation at the foot of the brook that the spring thaws and fall rains swell to a small cataract. This would account for the divergent descriptions of the landing place, but it is evident that the boats did not come as far south as 155th street, as has been in some accounts alleged. It was no doubt in these ravines leading down to the bridge and the Speedway that the bloodshed at the boats of which we are told took place.

The little half company under Captain David Lennox arrived on the bluffs just in time to gain a view of the extent of the force they were expected to oppose. Reinforced by one hundred men under Tudor and Edwards, they arrived on the heights near Morris' house early enough to fire on the enemy in their boats. The Americans were no mean marksmen, and although there were but 150 of them to oppose 800, they accounted for between 90 and 100 killed and wounded Highlanders; among whom their gallant Major, Alexander McIntosh, an officer with a fine record in Colonial wars, fell at the head of his men.

Fired by the resistance, the Scotsmen rushed upwards, and, from being "intended as a feint" in the British commander's scheme, the attack developed by the impetuosity of the troops, with the exception of the three charges at Fort Tryon, into one of the bloodiest affairs of the revolution.



While the affair was proceeding, Lieutenant-Colonel Bull, acting as Magaw's aide-de-camp, brought up a re-inforcement of two companies of militiamen, the latest that had arrived from Fort Lee, but arrived only to find that Lennox had been driven back to "the White House." This was the farmhouse on the west side of the post-road just south of headquarters. The reinforcement arrived therefore too late to be of service and was not engaged. They got under cover of some of the earthworks and were surrounded and taken prisoners. Of this fight General Howe said the position was well defended by the rebels, though his general reference to it is confined to the statement that 150 men, "with one eighteen-pounder, opposed 800 British, under cover of a battery." The mention of this gun has been perhaps, the cause of the error in locating the landing at 155th street, where the nearest part of the American line was located in which it is possible a gun of this calibre was available, and which may have been turned to the rear for a short time.

The British map shows some kind of fortification on the American side on the crest of the bluff at about 179th street, and an examination of the features of the locality indicates that there may have been slight defences on the rocky summit on the lines of 178th and 179th streets, just on the west side of Amsterdam avenue, in a wild, neglected piece of scrubwood, which is at present the haunt of tramps and behind which a little squatter's cottage is hidden from the view of the passers-by.

As the Scotsmen fought their way up the wooded and rocky hill-side overlooking the Harlem river towards 162d street, and "gained the heights, a sharp contest ensued." The resistance was stubborn and determined. It was Scot against Scot, for the defending force was composed of many of that blood, and was under the command of a Lennox and a McIntire. Some thirty of them were cut off and captured and a number were wounded.

Near the house of Colonel Morris were the huts in which had been quartered a considerable part of the American force during the summer and fall of '76. They were arranged in two lines running east and west near the post-road, about on the line with 162d street. As the Americans retired the Highlanders took the cover of the huts and thence commanded an easy descent towards the rear of the second line of intrenchments at 155th street, which from the want of men was entirely without defense.

They did not, however, advance at once, for they imagined the enclosed bastions contained concealed forces. But Cadwalader and his officers evidently and properly considered that they would promptly close in on the rear, and it was then that the retirement was ordered from the first line.

"They hesitated," says Graydon, "and this being perceived from the delay that took place, Colonel Cadwalader, to avoid the fatal consequences that must have resulted from the expected movement, immediately resolved to retire to the fort with the troops under his command."

It was no disorderly affair. Orders were sent to the right and left of the line to retire on signal, which, after a proper interval, was given, those on the left retiring obliquely towards the center of the second line, or at about the present entrance of Trinity Cemetery on Amsterdam avenue. They passed the line, which of course was taken in the rear, and, still advancing, "came opposite the enemy posted at the huts," received their fire" and returned it irregularly, but held back the British till they had passed.

As the junction took place between the Highlanders and Earl Percy's advancing forces, around the space between 155th and 160th streets, and the united commands advanced to follow the retreating Americans over the hillside towards the Hudson, Graydon and Forrest's company was nearly cut off and though the men escaped along the edge of the Hudson in Audubon Park, their two officers, who had gone up the hill to see what the situation was, found themselves surrounded, and seeing no alternative but surrender, clubbed their fuses in token of surrender and advanced towards the Highlanders. Their signs were perhaps mistaken or the soldiers were not ordered to cease firing, as they became the target for a fusillade until they came within fifty yards of the Highland line, and Graydon remarks how astonishing it was that "these blunt shooters could have missed" them, comparing them sarcastically with the excellent marksmen on the American side.

Resigning their weapons to an officer of the Forty-second, he put them in charge of a sergeant, who solemnly volunteered to them in broad Scotch dialect, as he took them away, the rebuke, "Young men, ye should never fight against your King." As they stood disarmed under his charge, a British officer of rank rode up at full gallop, and excitedly exclaimed, "What, taking prisoners? kill them, kill them; every man of them."

It may be remembered that in the military law of the period the garrison taken in an assault was subject to be put to the sword, as the old term was, and that at the summons of surrender Howe had threatened the garrison with this result in case of resistance. It is certain that many a poor fellow lost his life at the hands of the Hessian forces that day by refusal of mercy after he had surrendered to them. The British had perhaps been instructed otherwise after Magaw's reply, or in a general way were more humane.

Graydon seeing the risk he ran immediately doffed his hat and making him a bow said to him, "Sir, I put myself under your protec-

tion," a rebuke which effectually calmed and softened the officer, who, after a question as to the position of Fort Washington and the whereabouts of its commander, rode off. This scene seems to have taken place somewhere near the head of Audubon Park and Broadway, and the Hessian force then coming up, the captive officers were subjected to brutal threats and vile language on the part of some of the lower class of the hired soldiers.

Graydon and other officers, then amounting to nearly fifty in number, were marched to an old stable or outhouse, which may very probably have been located at Broadway and 161st street, where the walls of a barnyard still exist, bearing evidence of considerable age. Here they were examined to see if any were deserters from the British forces, an imputation which they seem heartily to have resented; were subjected to intolerable abuse, and were ordered about by men of inferior rank, whom Graydon describes as "contemptible whipsters." For the greater convenience of guarding them, they were later removed to the barn of Colonel Morris' house, which residence was then being utilized as temporary headquarters by the British commander. The barn probably stood some distance to the rear or north of the house, about on a line with 166th street. "It was," says Graydon, "a good new building," which, during the time of Washington's use of the dwelling, must frequently have sheltered the mounts of himself and the few aides who possessed such a luxury as a horse.

Here during the morning, as more and more captives were taken, a body of 150 to 200 prisoners was crowded, a motley group of officers and privates, regular and militia, continental and state, some in uniform, some without, and some in hunting shirts, that mortal aversion of the redcoats. By the latter some of the officers were plundered of their hats, and others of their coats. The non-commissioned officer on guard was but an ill-looking, low-bred fellow for a member "of this dashing corps of light infantry," as Graydon describes him and them, and, as his prisoner stood near him at the door, to obtain air, crowded and hustled him till he expostulated, when clubbing his fusée to strike the defenseless man, he exclaimed: "Not a word, sir, or I'll give you my butt."

"As to see the prisoners was a matter of some curiosity, we were complimented with a continual succession of visitants, officers of the British Army," some of whom were present when a Sergeant-Major came to take formal account of those captured. This may be assumed to have been during the time when the advance of the British awaited the result of the Hessian attack then proceeding on the north, and officers would be coming and going between the front and headquarters.

As the sergeant sat with his pen in his hand and his paper on his knee, he applied to each officer in turn for a description of his rank, with-

out actual insolence, but with "that animated degagee impudence which belongs to a self-complacent non-commissioned officer of the most arrogant army in the world." •

A little squat officer, a native of York county, Penn., the home of the men of Scotch-Irish descent composing Swope's detachment of the Flying Camp, who had lost his three-cornered beaver, and had received in exchange only the crown of a dirty old hat, when asked his rank, exclaimed in a "chuff" firm voice, "I am a keppun," at which a general laugh ensued at his expense, putting both captors and captured in a better humor. The afternoon wore on and the fighting ceased.

The day was seasonably cool, "yet from the number of men crowded into the barn, the air within became oppressive and suffocating," a foretaste for many a poor fellow of what he was to endure later on in New York.

The excitements of the day and the lack of air produced on the prisoners an excessive thirst, "and there was a continual cry for water," to which the soldiers on guard appear to have humanely responded, bringing water in a bucket continually. But though those "who were about the door did well enough, the supply was very inadequate to such a number of mouths, and many must have suffered much."

## XIV.

## THE ASSAULT OF THE MOUNT.

The course of events previously described, upon the east and southern sides of the central fortress, had so far been uniformly to the advantage of the assaulting forces, with the exception of the severe loss of life and limb incurred by the Highland battalion, which evidently caused the victorious forces to move forward with great caution. Their progress from each direction brought them gradually around the Mount on the south and east, as the Pennsylvanians and the Connecticut Rangers, retreating before them, crowded into the outer and inner lines of the main fort, to the inconvenience of those already posted there and of the artillerymen who were actively engaged in replying to the field batteries of the combined British and Hessian forces. The men were, in contemporary accounts, blamed for this course, but it does not seem that any other point of defense was open to them, no intrenchments having been provided between 160th street and 181st street, or any specially advantageous ground existing either in that direction or on the comparatively level ground to the east of the fort towards Washington Bridge.

Moreover, the general order had been distinctly made known directing the defense to hold the other lines as long as possible and then to fall back to the Fort, an order doubtless known to all the subordinate officers.

That the men had done their best to stem the advance is evidenced by the fact of their extreme exhaustion on reaching the fort, where the need of water soon began to be felt, the only available supply being, we may suppose, the little spring and stream at the foot of the glacis, behind the present property of Holyrood Church; a supply, however, which was exposed to musketry fire from both sides.

Statements were also made when the bitter result became known that Magaw failed to get the men to re-inforce the brave Southerners who were still staving off the Hessian advance at the north end of the hill. That there may have been some who, in the exhaustion of their state, thus failed in their duty is probable, but inasmuch as for a considerable time thereafter the entire British advance on south and east was held in check, it would seem that the whole force must have been fully engaged where they were. The relics of severe fighting have been found all along the line of the valley, from 181st street north to the rocks abreast of Fort Tryon, and local tradition records desperate fighting having taken place all along this half-mile of precipitous hillside, the

defenders having in places rolled great boulders on their foes, the positions of which were for long pointed out. The evidence of military relics show that British troops were engaged here as well as Hessians, and the probability is that the Guards and Light Infantry came over from Laurel Hill, and joined hands with the men of Schmidt's division in assaulting the hillside.

At its extreme head, the valley on the line of 183d street narrows to a mass of rocks, which face down its length and in which a cleft exists, locally known as the Hessian or Death "Gap," where it is stated they were mowed down by the Americans behind the rocks and the trenches on the hillside above.

Every probability of locality is in favor of tradition in this case, and in the valley immediately below the bones of many dead have been upturned in years gone by. All this fighting could not have been carried on only by Rawlings' men, so that a large part of those crowded in and around the fort must have taken part in it.

The day had worn on, and during the two hours of the forenoon and into early afternoon the fighting at the north end of the Mount had continued unabated. Two successive charges had been organized by the Hessian commander and had been repulsed, and now the crucial effort was to be made. Under cover of the hail from the heavy guns of the "Pearl," now tacking to and fro on the Hudson, the von Koehler grenadiers and the Waldeck regiment had pushed their way around the Hudson side of the hill and were well on the flank if not the rear of the little fort on its crest. The men of Knyphausen's column were reformed near Dyckman street and at the word again swarmed up the difficult hillside near Durando's. They did not find now so steady a fire to face. The numbers of the riflemen were thinned, and others had no effective weapons, fouled as they were with the ceaseless firing of hours of resistance. Against the bayonets of a numerous foe a clubbed rifle was of little avail, and the men retreated on the supporting line of earthworks above. But many stood their ground. Says John Reuber of Rall's, "We were obliged to creep along up the rocks, one falling down alive, another shot dead. We were obliged to drag ourselves up by the birch tree bushes up the height where we could not really stand." Men dropped all round. The little paddock in the hollow of the hill southwards from the Abbey Hotel has borne mute testimony to the fierce and bloody fight, when from time to time the bones of many dead have been turned up on its surface.

But to three sides at once the little band could oppose no longer a serious resistance. Rawlings was wounded in the thigh, his faithful major also struck down, and the decimation of the artillerymen silenced the little guns as Margaret Corbin fell. The crowning moment had

arrived. The rush of the grenadiers and Waldeckers proved irresistible, and with their hardy commander at their head they swarmed up the hill-top over the breastworks bayonet in hand. As they reached the summit the fighting colonel ordered the bugles blown, and shouting "Forward! all that are my grenadiers," led his men cheering "Hoch!" over the earthworks. So determined was the defense that assaulters and assaulted were crowded together, all mingled in confusion on the comparatively level ground around the Chittenden residence, now the residence of Mr. Francis Thayer. Germans and Americans ran together in the direction of Fort Washington over the ridge.

It is in full view of the Palisades across the river, and it is for these reasons that this may be assumed to have been the scene of butchery witnessed by Washington, which it is related drew tears to his eyes. He was certainly at this time watching with the utmost anxiety the course of events from the summit of the bluffs, and on seeing the final collapse of the stubborn defense at the north, he hastily pencilled a note of final direction to Magaw and handed it to Captain John Gooch, an aide of known courage, who promptly made his way to the shore and was rowed across the river.

The excited Germans, plying the bayonet among the retreating Americans, forced them back towards Fort Washington, where the guns of the men in the northerly trenches afforded them protection from further slaughter. The Waldeckers, taking advantage of the situation, pushed their way along the river front and, covered by the precipitous nature of the ground, got between the fort and the water, their main body coming to a halt about a hundred yards from the fort on the line of 185th to 187th street, while the column under Knyphausen's leadership came over the hilltop within musket range of the outer breastworks, behind which the exhausted Southerners had found refuge. Below, on the easterly side the men of the Wutginau and Rall regiments rolled back the line of their opponents and halted under the steep hillside below the Death Gap, taking what shelter they could find from the fire from the fort.

A large stone barn existed on the hill north of the fort, the precise location of which it has not been possible hitherto to identify, behind which Knyphausen and his staff collected while the troops were halted, and Rall, whose men had earned the distinction, was directed to send forward a demand for surrender. A breathing spell was desirable for both officers and men.

Calling a company commander to him, Rall said, "Hohenstein, you speak English and French, take a drummer with you, tie a white cloth on a gun-barrel, go to the fort and call for a surrender."

"I did this at once," relates the captain, "but they kept firing at me and the drummer till we came to the glacis, that is, the foot of the slope probably just opposite the old Fisher residence, where the hill commences to ascend to the Bennett house. The boys behind the earth-works finally perceived the errand of the officer, and ceased firing, when a party came out to learn his mission, and binding his eyes they led him within the outer defense, and sent word to the post commander. Colonel Cadwalader came down to him, and Hohenstein, who appears to have been very fully authorized to make terms, made him the following proposal: "He should immediately march out of the fort with the garrison, and they should lay down their arms before General Knyphausen. All ammunition, provisions, and whatever belonged to Congress should be faithfully made known. On the other hand, I gave him my word that all, from the commanding officer down, should retain their private property. Finally, a white flag should be immediately hoisted, to put a stop to all hostilities.

The commander asked for four hours time to consider, which, however, I refused, and allowed him only half an hour to speak with his officers."

The white flag was no doubt displayed, and both sides ceased firing, not again to be renewed, while those officers who had survived withdrew into the fort and anxiously conferred with Magaw on their situation. Their dilemma was truly unfortunate. Hemmed around on all sides, they might and probably could put up some further defense for a time, but as each commander reported the strength of the forces which had been opposed to his post, the hopelessness of a resistance to a bayonet charge in force from several points at once, became apparent. Nor was there now even a precarious line of retreat. The men of the Hessian brigade in the south were massed on the hillside near Depot lane, overlooking Jeffrey's Hook, and had no doubt already worked their way down into the battery upon that point, which they commanded from the rear. There was a bare chance that the Waldeckers had not closed in entirely between the fort and the river, but their advance pickets were there, and the "Pearl" had dropped down near their position and with her guns could have commanded the passage. As Captain Gooch, landing at the river's bank, clambered the heights, he must have seen the jaws of the trap closing on the devoted garrison.

Coming in on the council just as they had reached the determination that surrender was their only recourse, he delivered Washington's note, in which Magaw was asked to try and hold out till darkness should set in, when the general would endeavor to bring off the garrison, probably by attempting some strategy such as had been employed so success-



fully on Long Island, a very problematical affair, however, in these circumstances.

But the half hour was up and a decision must be made known. Determined to leave no effort untried, Magaw went down himself and spoke with Hohenstein.

His emotion was visible. "His fate seemed hard to him," says his honorable opponent. But delay was a point the captain was not authorized to concede, and Gooch, seeing his presence to be of no further avail, and not conceiving himself to be included as a member of the garrison then under flag of truce, turned and boldly made his retreat to his boat.

His desperate escapade was miraculously successful. Leaping down the rocks, and over the brushwood between the fort and the water, in what is now part of Fort Washington Park, he actually dodged the bayonets of the German pickets, and escaped the shower of bullets for which he was the target in his descent, and entering his boat, made his way to headquarters, and reported the disastrous condition of affairs.

Magaw's further discussion with Hohenstein produced no concession and the latter records one of the commander's remarks which appears to have struck him in reply probably to Hohenstein's promises of better terms by surrender to his own commander rather than by further delay and negotiation with Howe. "The Hessians" said he "make impossibilities possible."

Finally the captain said, "General Knyphausen is a hundred paces off; come with me, on my safe conduct, and see if he will give you better terms," a suggestion which Magaw accepted, and went out to the barn where a very short interview no doubt convinced him that no further concession whatsoever was to be gained from the haughty general, and word was passed in to the crowded garrison of the surrender, and as the news passed round the men broke into crying and cursing at the giving up of the fort.

There can be no doubt that Knyphausen had gained the position which fully entitled him to the credit of the surrender being personally made to him and his own forces, but it can be imagined to have been rather galling to the officers of the British army then waiting around the fort on the east and south, to have had their hired associates, upon whom many of them looked with hearty disfavor and contempt, become the actual conquerors of the position, and this feeling is rather amusingly evidenced in the two maps of the affairs of the day prepared by the two forces. In the British map of Sauthier, their forces are exhibited close up to the glacis between Holyrood Church and the Mount, while the Hessian forces are much further removed on the north, while on the German map issued by Knyphausen's order, the advantage of final position appears, and properly so, on the Hessian side.

That the Hessian general's work was, nevertheless, generously appreciated by Howe, seems clear from the renaming of the fortification in his honor, and its allotment to his force as their point of duty. But it would seem as if his undertakings were treated with scant regard. His emissary promised that the captured force should retain their private property, and Magaw stipulated, probably with the general personally, for humane treatment. Neither agreement was respected by the British authorities in their eventual treatment of the prisoners.

## XV.

## THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE.

By about four o'clock the new born banner of freedom was lowered, to be seen no more on this spot for seven weary years, and the flag of Britain, which had already fallen and risen on Manhattan Island, took its place over the fortress, which had induced so much faith in its defenders, as von Koehler's grenadiers marched in and took possession. Notwithstanding the terms of surrender promised, and probably made generally known, the reputation of the Hessians for brutality was so great that the defeated force feared barbarous treatment. When Captain von Malsburg, detailed to take possession, entered the lines of the fort, he was, he says, "surrounded with officers with fear and anxiety in their faces. They invited him to their barracks, pressed punch, wine and cold cakes upon him, complimented him on his affability, and told him they had not been led to expect such from a Hessian officer."

The men were told to fall in, and were marched out to surrender their arms. They must have gone down the lane that led to the fort, from the post-road at 181st street, through their abandoned breastworks to some open spaces near the road where they could be mustered for their march to captivity. No doubt this was done in the open meadow land southeast of the fort which belonged then to Blazius Moore of New York City. There is no other open land even now, for west, north or east of the fort the ground falls away abruptly.

Between a double line formed of the regiments of Rall and Alt von Lossberg, the patriots "laid down their arms, and gave up their yellow, blue, and white banners, on which Knyphausen looked with disdain." As the men filed out, the Hessians not on duty robbed them violently of their clothing and belongings, until the British officers took the matter in hand for very shame, and diverted the defenseless prisoners in another direction.

Forming into detachments, the dejected prisoners about 5 o'clock tramped between a heavy British guard to their fate in the city. The official count gave them as 2818 in number, while a later detailed list of the commissary department placed the number at 2858. The discrepancy was probably due to the wounded, who totaled ninety, and many were perhaps at the time of the roll call, still lying out with their wounded antagonists under the chill November sky.

Around the slope of Fort Tryon, and the face of the bluff from thence to 187th street, were stretched the dead and wounded of the

Hessian and Waldeck forces, and over on the Harlem side of the Laurel Hill, and around the Morris house, lay a score of British dead and five times that number of wounded. The price paid in blood for the capture of the position amounted to 56 dead and 276 wounded of the German forces, 20 dead and 110 wounded of the British, making 462 casualties in all, and including 1 field officer.

Of the Americans there were killed, Colonels William Baxter and Miller, Captain McCarter, Lieutenants Harrison and Tannihill, with 50 private soldiers; and 3 officers and 90 men were wounded, or 147 casualties in all.

The relief details were turned out from the various corps, to bring in the wounded and to inter the dead. The Hessian wounded lay thick around the Mount, many of them cursing their lot, and the dying bewailing the fate which had cost them limb and life in a quarrel in which they had no interest, beyond a paltry pittance of pay. The dead were evidently buried where they lay, or where the presence of sufficient earth enabled the body to be concealed. A long trench containing skeletons has been recently opened on the center line of Fort Washington avenue about seventy-five feet south of 181st street, which was probably the depository of those who died in or near the fort.

The allied losses seemed heavier at the time, and in New York were exaggerated to a great extent.

One Adam Barger related that it was the common talk in town "that there was a great many Hessians killed and many of the Highlanders, he heard an officer that came down with the prisoners tell an officer in town, who asked him how many they had lost, who told him between 14 and 15 hundred."

The material loss to the American cause was, as is now more clearly seen in the light of history, the most severe in the entire course of the Revolution, and it stands as a monument to the determination, not only of those who defended the post, but to those who, in spite of the bitter result, persisted in carrying on the unequal contest, the most conspicuous instance of that unwillingness to "stay beaten," which in the end brought success.

Some commiseration and respect, even in a city so full of British sympathizers as was New York, was shown on their arrival to the men who had made so bold a resistance. John McKesson describes the scene near what is now Chatham Square.

"The prisoners taken at Fort Washington were all paraded near the Jews burying ground; they were said to be 2,500; no insult was offered to them when paraded, nor any public huzzaing or rejoicing as was usual on similar and less occasions; whether this was owing to the

loss of the victors on that occasion is a secret to the common class of inhabitants in the city."

But the poor prisoners who had fought so pluckily may well have trembled at the fate in store for them as they marched that sad Saturday afternoon along the high road south.

Oliver Woodruff, a private soldier, who lived to reach the age of ninety, related his own experience, and was confirmed by others.

"We were marched to New York, and went to different prisons: 816 went into the new Bridewell, I among the rest, some into the sugar house, others into the Dutch Church. On Thursday morning they brought us a little provision, which was the first morsel we got to eat or drink after eating our breakfast on Saturday morning."

The building, a long two-story stone structure, had only recently been erected, on what is now the City Hall Park near Murray street and was not at this time even provided with shutters to the barred windows. "I was there three months," says Woodruff, "during that inclement season, and never saw any fire except what was in the lamps of the city. There was not a pane of glass in the windows, and nothing to keep out the cold but the iron gate."

These cruel hardships were eclipsed by the sufferings of the unfortunates thrust into the Sugar House and the Middle Dutch Church on the corner of Cedar and Nassau streets. Stripped of pews and with a temporary story constructed at the level of the gallery, the latter building was made to house no less than three thousand prisoners, where, as John Pintard related, "the prisoners taken on Long Island and Fort Washington, sick, wounded and well, were all indiscriminately huddled together."

A little less selfishness on the part of some of the other religious denominations, would have relieved some of this shocking condition of affairs.

The Reverend Mr. Shewkirk, pastor of the Moravian Church, the chapel of which stood at what is now Fulton and William streets, noted in his diary how on Monday, the 18th of November, British officers came to inspect the chapel, and at 4 P. M. there were four hundred of the prisoners from Fort Washington sent to occupy it. While he and others of the communion hustled round exerting influence with the commander to cancel the order, "The prisoners with the guard stood above half an hour in the street before our doors." When at last a countermand was obtained he thankfully recorded, "If these prisoners had come in, how much would our place have been ruined, as one may see by the North Church, not to mention the painful thought of seeing a place dedicated to our Saviour's praise made a habitation of darkness and uncleanness." So the poor fellows were turned back to be crowded into another

already overcrowded "habitation of darkness and uncleanness," where typhus and smallpox soon began to rage, and that pity denied to them by this minister of the Gospel was shown to them by the poor abandoned women of the half-burned town.

Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Bull tells how, "the enemy marched his command about a mile towards New York City to a farmhouse, where from Saturday to Tuesday A. M., they were without food, and on the latter day proceeded to New York City and were placed in a Methodist meeting house.

The next day, after signing a parole, Colonel Bull and his officers then had a house to reside in. An unknown gentleman sent him a half joe which enabled him to procure board, and an opportunity to visit the soldiers imprisoned in the Bridewell, almost every day, where many were dead and dying."

The horrors of the Sugar House, on what is now Liberty street, eclipsed all but the abominations of the prison ships. Here in a stone warehouse, with such ventilation only as could be gained from narrow slits of windows, without light, attendance, fire in winter or air in summer, the poor boys perished in hundreds. Fevers, frost-bite and suffocation made this a veritable charnel-house, the very dead being suffered to lie exposed for hours awaiting removal to the ever open burial trenches.

There does not seem any doubt that added to these terrors, the inhuman attendants of the sick, deliberately poisoned some, and indirectly by the use of contaminated food, poisoned others, "for the sake of their silver watches or silver buckles."

In the suffocating heat of summer, said an eye-witness named Dunlap, "I saw every narrow aperture of those stone walls filled with human heads, face above face, seeking a portion of the external air."

And we have to remember to the glory of these humble patriots, that at any time they could have obtained relief by agreeing to enlist in the ranks of those their countrymen opposing the forces of liberty.

Of all the poor boys taken at Fort Washington who went down in health and strength to captivity, nearly 2,800 strong, there remained, when an exchange was at last effected, just eighteen months later, only 800 alive.

"Although our sufferings were intolerable," wrote one of the survivors, "and the men were urged by those who had been their own townsmen and neighbors, who had joined the British, yet the instances were rare that they could be influenced to enlist" to oppose the cause of freedom, and with those few who did, the idea of the opportunity for eventual desertion was probably the moving cause.

No more heroic devotion has ever been recorded than that exhibited by these plain enlisted soldiers and militiamen. A death in the heat of action is a far more simple act than the deadly dying by inches of starvation, suffocation, filth, and disease.

If the men fared badly, their officers generally received no better treatment.

Lambert Cadwalader, in return for some special service previously rendered to a British officer of rank, was unconditionally liberated, and some were for a time admitted to parole, but other officers fared less favorably. Perhaps owing to fear of some attempt at escape, their paroles were rescinded, and they were crowded into the Provost jail, the brown-stone building which still stands on the northeast corner of City Hall Park.

Here they were confined under the control of the inhuman Cunningham, and sick and diseased, were herded together so that at night all were required to turn at once on the bare floor, on which room to recline could only be found in this manner. Neglected in sickness, slowly starved, and kept in close contact with those of their unfortunate comrades suffering from loathsome diseases, their fate was in no degree less terrible than that of their poor compatriots of the rank and file.

A grateful country should find no effort too great, no expense undue, that should preserve for all future generations the traces of the work of these heroes, the ground around which were laid, unmarked by their foes, the bodies of those that died in defense of the charge committed to them, and should think it shame that the immediate successors of the revolutionary period should have permitted to be destroyed the walls wherein the prisoners of Fort Washington passed their weary hours of suffering, on which were written and carved many a last and only record of the existence of many a poor patriot ere death released his spirit.

It is cause for satisfaction, that, by the erection of a distinctive monument, the actual site of the central position, in and around which the dramatic scenes took place, which have been here briefly described, has been effectually recorded by the joint efforts of the Empire State Society Sons of the American Revolution, and the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

The preservation of the site of the fort itself, and of the interesting remains of Fort "Tryon," is a duty that should be felt by every citizen of the vast metropolis which has grown from the little town long and ably defended by the efforts and sacrifices of the captured patriots, from a tyrannous system which would have cramped and retarded its development.

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# FORT WASHINGTON

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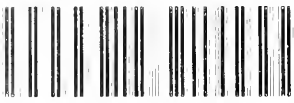








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